

FULL RACE PREVIEWS & WAGERING STRATEGIES FOR ALL STAKES RACES ON THE CARD

RACING DUDES **INSIDE TRACK**

TO THE 2020 MALIBU STAKES



EXCLUSIVE RACE COVERAGE

FULL IN-DEPTH BREAKDOWNS
OF ALL THE STAKES RACES

SPECIFIC PICKS & PLAYS

INCLUDES WIN, PLACE, SHOW, EXACTA, TRIFECTA,
SUPERFECTA, AND MULTI RACE WAGERS PLAYS

ENTIRE CARD ANALYSIS

INCLUDES RACE-BY-RACE ANALYSIS, BETTING
SUGGESTIONS, AND MULTI-RACE PLAYS FOR THE
ENTIRE SANTA ANITA PARK SATURDAY CARD

\$29.95 US \$39.95 CAN



WELCOME



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, 2020, including the \$300,000 *Runhappy Malibu Stakes* (G1) featuring budding superstar *Nashville* against the likes of *Charlatan* and *Independence Hall*.

The Racing Dudes have been at it for over 9 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 Park* in search of winning tickets on this loaded day of racing.

Along with the *Malibu*, *Santa Anita's* five other stakes on Saturday are the \$75,000 *Lady of Shamrock*, the \$200,000 *Mathis Brothers Mile* (G2), the \$200,000 *San Antonio* (G2), the \$300,000 *La Brea* (G1), and the \$300,000 *American Oaks* (G1).

But that's not all! Along with the six 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 Saturday card.

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

FULL RACE 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 4:

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

MATHIS BROTHERS MILE STAKES [G2]

OVERVIEW:

This might be the most difficult stakes on the card to handicap with a solid group lining up to pick up a big Grade 2 win. The 3-year-old turf division has been extremely difficult to predict all season long and this race looks no different, so we'll try to get a couple of prices across in this "box 'em up and call 'em home" event.

RACE SHAPE: EXPECT A SLOW PACE

Pure Speed: *Smooth Like Strait*

Pressing Speed: *Field Pass, Scarto*

Stalkers: *Strongconstitution, Storm the Court*

Closers: *Whisper Not, Heywoods Beach*

The pace should be pretty slow, as several of these like to sit back early and wait patiently to make their moves in the stretch. This could give Smooth Like Strait a big advantage; he looks like the only one who runs early.

TOP CHOICE: #5 SMOOTH LIKE STRAIT

The best 3-year-old turf horse in Southern California, he nearly took the Hollywood Derby (G1) last time out at Del Mar. That field was much tougher than what he'll face here and he's already defeated most of these in the past. He is squarely the one to beat in this spot.

MAJOR THREATS: #1 Whisper Not, #6 Field Pass

Whisper Not finished second against older allowance horses at Del Mar in his North American debut last time out. He should build upon that here. Field Pass ships in to represent the red-hot Mike Maker barn. He was last seen winning the Ontario Derby (G3) over Woodbine's synthetic surface.

LONGSHOTS TO USE: #7 Scarto

Scarto gets the services of Flavien Prat for the first time; that's enough to make him interesting. He won 2 straight at Del Mar before finishing second in the Twilight Derby (G2), but he must bounce back from a poor showing last time out in the Hollywood Derby (G1).

OTHERS: #2 Strongconstitution, #3 Storm the Court, #4 Heywoods Beach

Strongconstitution really struggled last time out when facing tough competition. Storm the Court just hasn't been able to put it together this year. Heywoods Beach has struggled when facing this kind of company.

PICKS AND PLAYS:

BET TO WIN: #5 Smooth Like Strait - Confidence Level: 3 out of 5

BET TO PLACE: #6 Field Pass - Confidence Level: 2.5 out of 5

ACROSS THE BOARD PLAY: #1 Whisper Not - Confidence Level: 2 out of 5

EXACTA: 1,5,6 BOX

TRIFECTA: 1,5,6,7 BOX

SUPERFECTA: 1,5,6,7 BOX

MULT-RACE WAGER HORSES: 1,5,6

STRAIGHT WAGER: \$20 to Win on #5 Smooth Like Strait

EXOTIC WAGER: \$2 Exacta BOX 1,5,6



RACE 7:

SAN ANTONIO STAKES [G2]

1 1/16 MILES (DIRT)
3-YEAR-OLDS & UP
\$200,000

OVERVIEW:

The San Antonio has produced several quality older horses over the years, making this a must-watch. The Southern California older division is wide open, but this could help determine who we need to watch heading into 2021. The most prominent is Mucho Gusto, who preps for a Pegasus repeat in this spot.

RACE SHAPE: EXPECT A MODERATE PACE

Pure Speed: *Take the One O One, Extra Hope*

Pressing Speed: *Sharp Samurai, Midcourt, Mucho Gusto*

Stalkers: *Idol*

Closers: *Kiss Today Goodbye, Combatant*

The pace should be moderate. Take the One O One looks like the clear speed, but Extra Hope shouldn't be far behind; they're both owned by Jay Em Ess Stable, too. Past them, a few of the others may stalk, but they likely won't get overly involved with the front two.

TOP CHOICE: #8 MUCHO GUSTO

It's nice to see the Pegasus winner finally return, and in a race that he should dominate with a normal effort. He was set for a big year until an injury forced him to miss most of the season. He'll use this race as a prep for a repeat in the 2021 Pegasus World Cup. This should be a nice stepping-stone for him.

MAJOR THREATS: #3 Extra Hope, #4 Sharp Samurai

Extra Hope is the hot horse heading into this event. He followed up his allowance win 2 back with a solid gate-to-wire score in the Native Diver Stakes (G3). A 4-time graded stakes winner on turf, Sharp Samurai has run well on dirt this year, finishing second in the Pacific Classic (G1) and third in the Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile (G1) last time out.

LONGSHOTS TO USE: #2 Kiss Today Goodbye, #6 Midcourt

Kiss Today Goodbye enters off of an allowance victory at Del Mar and Mike Smith takes over riding duties. Midcourt always enters these big California races, but he has just 1 win this season. He has some proving to do before we back him against this type of company.

OTHERS: #1 Take the One O One, #5 Combatant, #7 Idol

Take the One O One is the likely pace setter, but it's unlikely that he can hold on late. Combatant has seen better days. Idol seems a bit outclassed in a tough spot for his stakes debut.

PICKS AND PLAYS:

BET TO WIN: #8 Mucho Gusto - Confidence Level: 5 out of 5

BET TO PLACE: #3 Extra Hope - Confidence Level: 3 out of 5

ACROSS THE BOARD PLAY: #4 Sharp Samurai - Confidence Level: 3 out of 5

EXACTA: 3,8/3,4,8

TRIFECTA: 3,8/2,3,4,8/2,3,4,8

SUPERFECTA: 2,3,4,8 BOX

MULT-RACE WAGER HORSES: 8

STRAIGHT WAGER: \$50 to Win on #8 Mucho Gusto

EXOTIC WAGER: \$1 Trifecta 3,8/2,3,4,8/2,3,4,8



RACE 8:

LA BREA STAKES [G1]

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

OVERVIEW:

The La Brea is a race to watch each and every season, featuring solid 3-year-old fillies and competitive betting opportunities. This year's evenly-matched group might be missing A-list stars this time around, but this might be one of the best betting races on the card. Trainer Bob Baffert has four of the entries.

RACE SHAPE: EXPECT A FAST PACE

Pure Speed: *Merneith, Biddy Duke, Motivated Seller*

Pressing Speed: *Princess Mo, Himiko, Secret Keeper, Golden Principal, Stellar Sound*

Stalkers: *Provocation*

Closers: *Finite, Fair Maiden*

The pace should be rapid. Several of these like to gun it early, which should give the stalkers and closers really good shots to mow them down late. Even if one of the speed horses fails to fire, the pace should be hot.

TOP CHOICE: #5 FINITE

She comes into this race hot after picking up a solid win in the Chilukki Stakes (G3) last time out at Churchill Downs. This 7-furlong distance should be right up her alley and a fast early pace would set up perfectly for her late kick. She was at one time a Kentucky Oaks (G1) favorite, so the talent is there.

MAJOR THREATS: #2 Merneith, #3 Himiko, #8 Motivated Seller, #4 Secret Keeper

Merneith enters off of a nice win at Keeneland for Baffert in the Fort Springs Stakes. Himiko has been solid for Baffert lately, winning 2 in a row with ease. This will be her first stakes try. Motivated Seller ships in for trainer Chad Brown after a solid second in the Fort Springs. Secret Keeper could be a factor if she bounces back from a really poor effort last time out. She offers value here.

LONGSHOTS TO USE: #7 Provocation, #10 Golden Principal, #11 Stellar Sound

Provocation and Golden Principal, the other two Baffert fillies, can compete with this group on their best days. Consistency has been their biggest problem. Stellar Sound cuts back in distance, which she should enjoy. The problem is, she probably won't be a long shot in here, so her price should be the determining factor.

OTHERS: #1 Princess Mo, #6 Biddy Duke, #9 Fair Maiden

This group seems to be a bit overmatched no matter how you break this one down. They'll have to improve tremendously from a speed figure standpoint.

PICKS AND PLAYS:

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

BET TO PLACE: #3 Himiko - Confidence Level: 2.5 out of 5

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

EXACTA: 2,3,5 BOX

TRIFECTA: 2,3,4,5 BOX

SUPERFECTA: 2,3,4,5 BOX

MULT-RACE WAGER HORSES: 2,3,4,5,8

STRAIGHT WAGER: \$10 to Win on #5 Finite

EXOTIC WAGER: \$.50 Cent Trifecta BOX 2,3,4,5



RACE 9:

AMERICAN OAKS [G1]

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

OVERVIEW:

The American Oaks is a prestigious event offering 3-year-old turf fillies a final shot at Grade 1 glory against their own age group. This field drew a strong California cast that should yield an ultra-competitive race, but you can bet that the shippers will have a big say in things. The East Coast is well-represented.

RACE SHAPE: EXPECT A SLOW PACE

Pure Speed: *Duopoly*

Pressing Speed: *Sharing, Neige Blanche*

Stalkers: *Capital Structure, Going to Vegas, Luck Money*

Closers: *Red Lark, Miss Addie Pray, Guitty, California Kook*

It seems like the Chad Brown shipper Duopoly has a shot to be the lone speed in this spot. If that happens, she'll have a big advantage, but Sharing and Neige Blanche won't be far behind.

TOP CHOICE: #9 SHARING

She suffered her first loss of the season last time out in the Matriarch Stakes (G1) in her debut against older horses. She only lost by 3/4 of a length, though, and was closing with a furious rally. She drops down into a stakes restricted to 3-year-olds and should be extremely tough to beat.

MAJOR THREATS: #1 Red Lark, #3 Capital Structure, #8 Duopoly

Red Lark is one of the better turf horses in California and will try to use the home track advantage against the powerful east coast shippers. Brown placed both Capital Structor and Duopoly in the race; each was a winner last time out. Duopoly might also have a major pace advantage over this field.

LONGSHOTS TO USE: #4 Going to Vegas, #5 Luck Money, #7 California Kook, #10 Neige Blanche

These are all logical if the east coast shippers fail to fire. Going to Vegas nearly won a Grade 3 in each of her last 2 starts. Luck Money has won 2 straight coming into this event. California Kook has raced competitively in several big California stakes. Neige Blanche was third in the Belmont Oaks (G1) last time out.

OTHERS: #2 Miss Addie Pray, #6 Guitty

Miss Addie Pray seems to be overmatched from a speed figure perspective. Guitty has not put her best foot forward in her last few starts.

PICKS AND PLAYS:

BET TO WIN: #9 Sharing - Confidence Level: 3 out of 5

BET TO PLACE: #8 Duopoly - Confidence Level: 3 out of 5

ACROSS THE BOARD PLAY: #3 Capital Structure - Confidence Level: 2 out of 5

EXACTA: 3,8,9 BOX

TRIFECTA: 1,3,8,9 BOX

SUPERFECTA: 1,3,8,9 BOX

MULT-RACE WAGER HORSES: 3,8,9

STRAIGHT WAGER: \$20 to Win on #9 Sharing

EXOTIC WAGER: \$2 Exacta BOX 3,8,9



RACE 10:

RUNHAPPY MALIBU STAKES [G1]

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

OVERVIEW:

The main event drew quite the star-studded cast, even though the field is a bit small. The budding superstar Nashville takes on Charlatan and Independence Hall, big-time horses earlier in the year before injury forced them to miss most of the year. Who will prevail between them? Can an outsider pull the upset?

RACE SHAPE: EXPECT A FAST PACE

Pure Speed: *Nashville, Charlatan*

Pressing Speed: *Independence Hall*

Stalkers: *Thousand Words*

Closers: *Collusion Illusion, Express Train*

The pace is going to be insane here if Nashville and Charlatan hook up early. These two are extremely fast, while Charlatan come in off a layoff, which could make it even faster. The stalkers and closers will have a great shot to catch the front runners if the pace materializes.

TOP CHOICE: #3 NASHVILLE

There is no denying how powerful he looked in his last 2 starts, both of which came at Keeneland and both of which looked extremely easy. He could simply be faster than everyone else in the race and has a great chance to win.

MAJOR THREATS: #4 Charlatan,
#6 Independence Hall

Charlatan returns from an injury, he should be strong. At one time, he was Baffert's most promising 3-year-old. Independence Hall isn't getting the headlines like Nashville and Charlatan, but he's never lost when racing in one-turn events. He returned sharp after a long layoff last time out.

LONGSHOTS TO USE: #1 Collusion Illusion,
#2 Thousand Words

Collusion Illusion might possess the perfect running style for this event. The pace should be extremely fast, making his late-running style dangerous in the stretch. Thousand Words could also benefit from a hot pace, making it reasonable that he hits the board with a late run as he cuts way back in distance.

OTHERS: #5 Express Train

Express Train moves back to the dirt, his best surface, but he has a lot of proving to do before we can trust him in a spot like this.

PICKS AND PLAYS:

BET TO WIN: #3 Nashville - Confidence Level: 4 out of 5

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

ACROSS THE BOARD PLAY: #6 Independence Hall -
Confidence Level: 3 out of 5

EXACTA: 3,4,6 BOX

TRIFECTA: 3,4/1,3,4,6/1,3,4,6

SUPERFECTA: 1,3,4,6 BOX

MULT-RACE WAGER HORSES: 3,4,6

STRAIGHT WAGER: \$20 to Win on #3 Nashville

EXOTIC WAGER: \$2 Exacta BOX 3,4,6



RACE 11:

LADY OF SHAMROCK STAKES

1 MILE (TURF)
FILLIES 3-YEAR-OLDS
\$75,000

OVERVIEW:

This ends the Opening Day stakes action on what is one of the more challenging and fun cards we've seen at Santa Anita Park in a while. The 3-year-old turf fillies have been tough to predict all season long, so expect some prices coming home here. We'll closely watch how the turf plays early in the card and use that to our advantage as we move toward the bigger races later in the day.

RACE SHAPE: EXPECT A SLOW PACE

Pure Speed: Nasty

Pressing Speed: Annangel

Stalkers: Beguiled, On Mars, Last First Kiss

Closers: Applecross, Miss Extra, Moonhall Milly, Counterparty Risk, Warren's Showtime

This turf event seems to have a slow pace on paper, with only one horse entered that has any interest in the lead. If Nasty is allowed to get an uncontested lead, she'll be tough for the stretch runners to catch.

TOP CHOICE: #9 WARREN'S SHOWTIME

Warren's Showtime won over this track and distance 2 starts back in the Autumn Miss Stakes (G3) and has been ultra-consistent all year long, hitting the board in 8 of her 9 starts. These 1-mile turf races seem to be where she runs her best. She should be tough to beat.

MAJOR THREATS: #3 Beguiled, #4 On Mars, #8 Counterparty Risk

Beguiled enters off of a nice allowance victory last time out at Del Mar and Flavien Prat returns to the saddle. Like Beguiled, On Mars also won an allowance at Del Mar and retains her rider, Mike Smith. Counterparty Risk ships in for trainer Chad Brown, which is always a dangerous angle.

LONGSHOTS TO USE: #1 Applecross, #7 Nasty, #10 Annangel

Applecross cuts back to a mile and gets the riding services of John Velazquez. Nasty could be the lone speed in this spot; if that happens, she'll become very dangerous on the front end. She nearly beat our top choice 2 starts back. Annangel could benefit from a slow pace up front.

OTHERS: #2 Miss Extra, #5 Moonhall Milly, #6 Last First Kiss

Miss Extra had some hype for her United States debut but did very little running. Moonhall Milly failed to make much noise in her only prior stakes try. Last First Kiss will try the turf after a couple of so-so efforts on the dirt lately.

PICKS AND PLAYS:

BET TO WIN: #9 Warren's Showtime - Confidence Level: 2.5 out of 5

BET TO PLACE: #4 On Mars - Confidence Level: 2 out of 5

ACROSS THE BOARD PLAY: #8 Counterparty Risk - Confidence Level: 2 out of 5

EXACTA: 4,8,9 BOX

TRIFECTA: 3,4,8,9 BOX

SUPERFECTA: 3,4,8,9 BOX

MULT-RACE WAGER HORSES: 1,3,4,7,8,9

STRAIGHT WAGER: \$10 to Win on #9 Warren's Showtime

EXOTIC WAGER: \$.50 Cent Trifecta BOX 3,4,8,9

SANTA ANITA



Race 1: 3-1-11-2

#3 Aunt Lubie drops back down to the allowance ranks for this event, which is the right class fit for her. She was in a little too tough last time out. **#1 Kookie Gal** has solid back class and picks up Flavien Prat to ride. **#11 Shanghai Truffles** won over this track 2 starts back and finished third against similar rivals last time out. **#2 Sassyserb** runs consistently well at this distance and at Santa Anita. Ricardo Santana Jr. jumps aboard.

Exacta: 1,3,11 BOX

Trifecta: 1,2,3,11 BOX

Multi-Race: 1,2,3,11

Suggested Bet: \$1 Exacta BOX 1,3,11

Race 2: 2-1-6-4

#2 Affable ran well on debut, finishing second while earning a solid speed figure. His breeding suggests he will excel at 7-furlongs. **#1 Barraza** gets the services of John Velazquez and comes from the always-tough Bob Baffert barn. He did finish behind Affable on debut, though. **#6 Wipe the Slate** was second to superstar Life Is Good last time out. **#4 Sir Flatter** debuts for a barn that does well with first-time starters.

Exacta: 1,2,6 BOX

Trifecta: 1,2/1,2,4,6/1,2,4,6

Multi-Race: 1,2,6

Suggested Bet: \$1 Exacta BOX 1,2,6

Race 3: 1-2-8-6

#1 Defense Wins returns to the dirt after a failed turf effort. The last time he raced at Santa Anita, he broke his maiden nicely in a \$50k maiden claimer. **#2 Hapi Hapi** nearly won at this level last time out at Del Mar, missing by less than a length. **#8 Zorich** takes a big class drop for this event after running in starter allowance races. Flavien Prat jumps back aboard for this race. **#6 Next Revolt** must rebound from a poor effort last time out. Desormeaux has the ability to improve horses when they run for him second off the claim.

Exacta: 1,2,8 BOX

Trifecta: 1,2,6,8 BOX

Multi-Race: 1,2,6,8

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

Race 5: 3-1-11-6

#3 Medusa's Gaze moves to the barn of Kristin Mulhall, who excels in these types of races, and also switches to the dirt. **#1 Big Chick** cuts back to sprinting, which is where she fits. **#11 Warren's Memorable** was close to winning on 2 separate occasions, which is more than you can say about the rest of this field. **#6 Miss Tater Tot** could have better luck as she moves to the dirt for the first time.

Exacta: 1,3,11 BOX

Trifecta: 1,3,6,11 BOX

Multi-Race: 1,3,6,11

Suggested Bet: \$.50 Cent Trifecta BOX 1,3,6,11

Race 6: 6-2-7-1

#6 Quick Finish nearly won at this level last time out, which was his first start on dirt in quite a while. He'll be tough here with John Velazquez aboard. **#2 Rayray** tries turf for powerful connections. His breeding suggests the lawn won't be a problem. **#7 Club Aspen** is taking a big class drop for this race, while his trainer loves using bug jockey's. **#1 Tripoli** gets a small cut back in distance, which could be to his liking.

Exacta: 2,6,7 BOX

Trifecta: 1,2,6,7 BOX

Multi-Race: 1,2,6,7

Suggested Bet: \$1 Exacta BOX 2,6,7



TICKET SUGGESTIONS

Race 1: \$0.50 Pick 5

1,2,3,11 with 1,2,6 with 1,2,6,8 with 5 with 1,3,6,11 = \$96

Race 2: \$0.50 Pick 4

1,2,6 with 1,2,6,8 with 1,5,6 with 1,3,6,11 = \$72

Race 7: \$0.50 Pick 5

8 with 2,3,5,8,11 with 3,8,9 with 3,4,6 with 3,4,7,8,9 = \$112.50

Race 8: \$0.50 Pick 4

2,3,5,11 with 3,8,9 with 3,4,6 with 7,8,9 = \$54

