RACING DUDES INSIDE TRACK

TO THE BLUE GRASS STAKES

THE BLUE GRASS STAKES

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WELCOME

THE BLUE GRASS STAKES

This Inside Track to the Blue Grass wagering guide gives you an inside look at all five stakes races running on the card April 6, 2019, at Keeneland. The Racing Dudes have been at it for years, offering daily handicapping picks and analysis for every track across the country. For this year's Inside Track to the Blue Grass, our lead handicappers have been scouring through the card at Keeneland in search of winning tickets on this loaded day of racing.

The $1,000,000 Toyota Blue Grass (G2) is the main event Saturday at Keenland, serving as a 100-point prep race for the Kentucky Derby (G1). Along with the Blue Grass, there will be four other graded stakes races on the card, including the Central Bank Ashland (G1) - a major prep for the Kentucky Oaks (G1) - along with the Madison (G1), the Shakertown (G2), and the Commonwealth (G3).

But that's not all! Along with the Blue Grass, this Inside Track to the Blue Grass wagering guide will also have coverage from the other two Kentucky Derby prep races running April 6, 2019: the Wood Memorial (G2) and Santa Anita Derby (G1).

IN THIS ALL-INCLUSIVE INSIDE TRACK TO BLUE GRASS YOU CAN FIND:

- Exclusive Exotics Wagers and pace analysis on the Wood Memorial and Santa Anita Derby from award-winning handicapper Mike "Saratoga Slim" Spector

- Multi-Race Wager plays and strategies on the Wood Memorial and Santa Anita Derby from handicapping expert Mike Somich

Race by Race analysis of all stakes races on the Keeneland card including:

‣ Overview of the race
‣ 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:

-Exclusive Picks and Plays for each race which include: Win bet, place or show bet, long shot across the board play, exacta, trifecta, Superfecta, horses to use in multi-race wagers, what to play on a small budget, and what to play on a large budget. Each win, place, show, or across the board selection comes with a confidence rating, so you can see how strongly we feel about each pick.

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!

WOOD MEMORIAL & SANTA ANITA DERBY
ANALYSES

BY MIKE "SARATOGA SLIM" SPECTOR

The biggest single day to qualify for the Kentucky Derby is upon us this Saturday with the Wood Memorial Stakes, the Blue Grass Stakes, and the Santa Anita Derby all running within a half-hour of each other and giving out 510 total Derby points! While much of this Guide will cover the stakes action at Keeneland, you may want to wager on the action at Aqueduct and Santa Anita Park, too.

To help give you a few novel wagering approaches for the Wood Memorial and the Santa Anita Derby, I'll give you the pace projections and then my exotic ticket structure advice using a $100 budget.

The Wood Memorial is a wide-open 11-horse race without a strong favorite, while the Santa Anita Derby is a small field of six with a likely short-priced first choice. These are dramatically different races, so distinct approaches are needed for each one. Let's pick apart their fields and pace scenarios.

MANY OPTIONS IN WOOD MEMORIAL

The Wood Memorial hasn't produced many Kentucky Derby top contenders in the past few years and was even downgraded to a Grade 2 in 2017. That doesn't mean that it isn't still a good betting opportunity, though, and this year's field is ripe for the picking.

Let's start with the likely favorite, the Tampa Bay Derby (G2) winner #2 Tacitus, who is far from a slam dunk here. The Bill Mott trainee benefited from a dream trip last time out when the Red Sea parted, giving him an inside run to the wire to win by 1 1/4 lengths over fellow Wood entry #10 Outshine. Tacitus was coming off of a long layoff and got a strong pace that bolstered his late move. With 50 points accrued for that win, he is already assured a spot in the Kentucky Derby, so Mott may not squeeze the lemon dry here. Tacitus may get a decent pace here again, and even though he is a likely winner, his odds may be low enough (he's 5/2 on the morning line) that he won't present value versus his chances of winning.

The two victors of Aqueduct's prior prep races this year also have questions to answer at short prices. #4 Haikal (7/2) won last month's Gotham Stakes (G3), a one-turn mile event, and got the perfect setup: closing from the clouds into a suicidal pace. His pedigree doesn't scream out distance, as he is a half-brother to the late top sprinter Takaful. The 1 1/8-mile distance of the Wood Memorial will be the longest that he's run in his career by a full 1/8 mile, and he may return to one-turn sprints after this.

The other Aqueduct winter prep winner, #1 Tax (9/2), doesn't have distance questions, as he won the Withers Stakes (G3) going this exact 1 1/8-mile trip. He also ran a tough third in the Remsen Stakes (G2) as a juvenile last year at this distance. The key question about those two races is the class level that he faced. The Remsen winner Maximus Mischief returned to run flat in the Holy Bull Stakes (G3) to start the year and then was injured, so we are not sure of that Remsen field's level. The Withers field, though, is very questionable. Tax won it by a head over fellow Wood entry #7 Not That Brady (20/1), who finished last of eight runners in the Gotham after fighting a quarter crack coming into it. Our Braintrust, the Withers third-place finisher by a neck, ran very poorly in one of the two Rebel Stakes (G2) divisions, finishing 10th by 19 lengths. Tax may sit a good trip behind the early leaders in the Wood, but the former claimer might not be good enough against this level. Also, having been off for the two months since the Withers, he is giving up a level of fitness and recency to most of the field.

Since Tacitus, Haikal, and Tax all make me hesitate, this is the opportunity to take a stand and try to get home a price. Look for that to come from the aforementioned Outshine (6/1). Trained by Todd Pletcher, Outshine won't be double-digit odds, but if you can get win money down on him at 9/2 or higher, then he provides good Win pool value. We'll see if we can get that price, but with the three prior horses mentioned all taking money, Outshine should also provide value in the exacta and trifecta pools. He was a precocious juvenile, breaking his maiden last May at Belmont Park. After running fifth in the Tremont Stakes (coincidentally, behind Our Braintrust), he needed eight months off due to "baby issues." When he returned at Gulfstream in early Febru-

ary, he won impressively at 7 furlongs while adding blinkers, then followed that with a strong runner-up finish in the Tampa Bay Derby. There, he sat off the hot pace and was forced four-wide but still battled on, beating all other foes except the dream-tripping Tacitus.

Will Outshine turn the tables on Tacitus? If he's double the price, then he's worth the bet. With only 20 points currently to his name, Outshine will need to hit the board to even make the Derby, so Pletcher will have him primed. Pletcher has been hot lately, winning the Sunland Derby (G3) with Cutting Humor and running second in the Louisiana Derby (G2) with Spinoff, so we'll see if he can keep it going. Additionally, Sol Kumin's Madaket Stables recently bought into Outshine before this race, and he has a good record of buying into Derby contenders, which include Justify, Audible, and Exaggerator.

WOOD MEMORIAL PACE ANALYSIS

#3 Hoffa's Union (6/1) had an impressive gate-to-wire debut win at Laurel Park on February 28 and will likely try to attempt the same thing here. Sharp owner Gary Barber privately purchased him after that race and transferred him to trainer Mark Casse. Originally pointed to the Blue Grass, he was re-routed here when that field over-filled because he doesn't have the career earnings (used to break up an overdrawn field) necessary to make the Keeneland gate. He hasn't taken pressure from top runners before, and he may get it from Not That Brady to his outside. The pace should be swift enough to wear these two down and set it up for the second flight to get a jump on the closers.

Tax should get a pocket trip leaving from the rail, but he will be taking dirt throughout. Hall-of-Fame jockey John Velazquez will need to hustle Outshine out of gate 10 in order to get good position in the second flight and not get caught wide going into the first turn. Tacitus will likely take back a bit, while Haikal will drop way to the rear of the field in hopes that the pace heats up for his one-run close.

WOOD MEMORIAL EXOTIC WAGERS

I'm going to leverage my opinion on #10 Outshine to make money, starting with a $20 Win bet – if his odds are 9/2 or better. I'll then pair him up in an exacta box with #2 Tacitus. Yes, I said earlier that Tacitus is a vulnerable favorite, but he is also the most likely winner,

so I'll play them together in an $8 exacta box.

I need a longshot to play in the trifecta, so I'll box Outshine and Tacitus with #5 Final Jeopardy (8/1). Trainer Jason Servis can do no wrong lately, having won the Florida Derby (G1) with Maximum Security for Gary and Mary West, who also own Final Jeopardy. After losing as the favorite in Gulfstream Park's Limehouse Stakes to start the year, he returned to impressively win at a mile. Sired by Kentucky Derby winner Street Sense out of an Unbridled's Song mare, he has plenty of distance pedigree and may get a nice trip in mid-pack, with plenty left to make a move late to get into the picture. He also picks up Aqueduct's leading rider Manny Franco, who is perhaps the most underrated jockey in the nation. I'll play a $2 exacta box with Tacitus, Outshine, and Final Jeopardy for another $12 investment.

My last bet will be a $2 trifecta box with Tacitus, Outshine and Final Jeopardy for another $12.

My total wagers for the Wood Memorial come to $60:

$20 Win: #10
$8 Exacta Box ($16 total): #2, #10
$2 Exacta Box ($12 total): #2, #5, #10
$2 Trifecta Box ($12 total): #2, #5, #10

SANTA ANITA DERBY FULL OF STARS

With a short field in the Santa Anita Derby, it'll be tough to make money. It'll be even tougher if you bet #6 Game Winner (4/5). The juvenile champion and top-ranked Kentucky Derby contender on most pundits' lists, Game Winner will likely be at or below his morning line odds in this six-horse field. You just can't put win money on him at that price; it'll also be tough to get rich in the exotics.

Does that mean play against Game Winner? Begrudgingly, yes. Hear me out. Game Winner shipped back from Arkansas only three weeks after laying it all on the line in the stretch before losing to Omaha Beach by a nose in one of the Rebel divisions. That was off of a four-month layoff, and now he swings right back into the Santa Anita Derby in just three weeks?

Baffert also said this week on a press conference call, *"If he ran the same race (as the Rebel), I'd be fine with it. The next one (the Kentucky Derby), that's when we really want him to take the big step. We just want him to stay healthy and keep him right there on that level. We really don't want a blowout race the race before."* Does that sound like a trainer that is going to tighten the screws to win the Santa Anita Derby? I know it's tough to base your wagers on trainers' quotes and it is a Grade 1 race, but his 45 points already accrued are enough to clinch a spot in the Derby gate. Besides fitness, he has little to gain here. Additionally, he will not be close to the early pace, where two of last summer's top juveniles will likely set a moderate pace. Will he be all-out to chase down his stablemate #1 Roadster (5/2) and the ultra-talented #5 Instagrand (3/1)?

On the same conference call, Baffert's tone was very hopeful when speaking about Roadster, the horse that last July he called his top juvenile. When I asked Baffert if he was concerned about Roadster's ability to get the distance, he replied, *"He's bred to run 1 1/2 miles."* He also added, *"His comeback race (winning a mile allowance last month) was off the charts. I was happy with it. (Jockey) Mike Smith was happy with it. He's come into this race so well."* Roadster needs to finish first or second in order to make the Kentucky Derby gate.

Since Roadster has the hype and will likely be the second wagering choice, that leaves Instagrand as the value play. After he floundered in the Gotham while making his sophomore debut, many gave up on a horse that was the crop's top prospect last August. He makes the jump to 1 1/8 miles in his first career start around two turns, so no one knows what he'll do. Even his owner Larry Best and Hall of Fame trainer Jerry Hollendorfer don't know if he's a sprinter or a router. Sometimes horses cherish stretching out and show up huge, so if Instagrand is at his morning line or better, then it's worth a shot to find out. He did his best running while on the front-end as a juvenile, so if he gets on the lead and has it his way, then he may burst away from the field like he did when he won his two 2018 starts by a combined 20 lengths.

SANTA ANITA DERBY PACE ANALYSIS

Leaving from the rail, Roadster may have to gun it from the gate in order to get forward position, but in a six-horse field, how quick will he really go? Roadster was content to sit second in his return race and may do the same thing here.

Instagrand is the fastest horse in the race and has done his best running on the front. He was forced to rate in the Gotham behind an ultra-fast pace, but he will likely not see the same thing here. It will be very disappointing if jockey Flavien Prat doesn't clear the four horses to his inside and get on the lead to take it to this field early and often. Instagrand's speed is his prime weapon and he should be allowed to use it. Prat should let him take this field as far as he can.

Game Winner and #2 More Ice (30/1) will sit behind #3 Nolo Contesto (6/1) and #4 Synthesis (30/1). Game Winner will make a late run at Instagrand and Roadster, but if the pace doesn't heat up or turn into a duel, then Game Winner may not get past them.

SANTA ANITA DERBY EXOTIC WAGERS

I'll start with a $20 Win bet on #5 Instagrand at 3/1 odds or better with the hope that he wires the field. Taking a crazy stand against Game Winner, I'll play a $10 exacta box with #5 Instagrand and #1 Roadster. That brings us to our original $100 budget overall.

$20 Win: #5
$10 Exacta Box ($20 total): #1, #5

If I make money on the Wood Memorial and want more action here, then I'll play a $10 straight trifecta with Instagrand and Roadster in the first and second positions over #6 Game Winner in third position, for a total $20 ticket.

$10 Trifecta: #1, #5 with #1, #5 with #6

Good luck, and let's make some bankroll for the Kentucky Derby! ∎

PICK 4 TO SCORE:
BLUE GRASS WEEKEND

BY MIKE SOMICH

We are on the home stretch of a crazy Kentucky Derby trail! There have been upsets up and down the preps, and I don't see why that won't continue Saturday. Vekoma is a weak favorite at Keeneland, I'll be against Tax and Haikal at Aqueduct, and Game Winner is anything but a lock at Santa Anita Park.

That all means value in the Pick 4s if we can score. Let's go coast to coast with some big-time Pick 4 pools at Aqueduct and Santa Anita Park!

AQUEDUCT LATE PICK 4
RACE 8:

I've been preaching on The Magic Mike Show that a lot of the prep results that we've seen have been due to pace. Well, this first leg has a clear lone speed, so let's kick this off with #4 Positive Spirit, who I'll be singling on my shorter ticket. Throw out her last race at Fairgrounds; she just wasn't right. Check out here eye-popping effort here at Aqueduct going this same 1 1/8-mile distance. She shouldn't be pressed, and a :49 opening 1/2-mile isn't out of the question. On my large ticket, I'll only add one more here, #5 Always Shopping. She's progressed nicely every single start for trainer Todd Pletcher and has proven that she can handle this distance. That's key because not too many 3-year-olds are capable of running well going this long.

RACE 9:

I often talk about horses that leave the Derby trail and get back to what they are good at. I'm using two of those here. #8 World of Trouble has been nothing short of amazing since cutting back to sprinting. He'll be a very common single here, but he did not draw very well. The combination of the post, the distance (7 furlongs is a touch long), and the presence of speedball Skyler's Scramjet means that I'll take a crack at beating him. I'll start with #2 Vino Rosso, who looked good in his 4-year-old debut. He's undefeated at both 7 furlongs and 1 mile, so the distance should suit him nicely, and we know that he'll have pace to chase. Let's go

bombs away on #1 Sir Ballantine as well. He's the only true dead closer and he's won at this distance. If the race falls apart, then he'll be winking at the queen from the winner's circle.

RACE 10:

After last weekend, you've got to use #5 Final Jeopardy from the Jason Servis barn and owners Gary and Mary West. He should love the added distance and has every right to take a nice step forward second time out. #3 Hoffa's Union also catches my eye off of his snappy maiden score, and the fact that he's a Union Rags colt out of a Malibu Moon mare gives him some validation. Don't underestimate the move to the Mark Casse barn, either; he wins at 33% with starters running first out from his barn. I'll use the Pletcher bomb #6 Overdeliver here as well. I liked the fact that he rated and won first out, a trip that he should sit again here. Finally, I do think that I need to use #2 Tacitus defensively here. He got a dream trip in the Tampa Bay Derby (G3) and had pace to chase, but his speed figure in his first start as a 3-year-old was impressive and he's an improving son of Tapit, so beware.

RACE 11:

The one-turn mile distance at Aqueduct really suits #3 Arthur's Hope. He's got the pace edge and will be tough to catch in this spot. Just to his outside, #4 Dark N Cloudy should sit off of his flank and, if he's good enough, get first jump and have a great chance. I will add #10 Expert, who looked ultra-impressive first time out for trainer Linda Rice. She wheels him back in a protected spot for the second straight time and he should get a dream trip. I'll close it out with #12 Storm Prophet, who's a pick-up-the-pieces horse in a race that could fall apart.

DEEP TICKET: $0.50 Pick 4: 4, 5 / 1, 2, 8 / 2, 3, 5, 6 / 3, 4, 10, 12 = $48

SHORT TICKET: $2 Pick 4: 4 / 2, 8 / 3, 5, 6 / 3, 4 = $24

Now, let's head west to cash that Santa Anita Derby Pick 4!

SANTA ANITA LATE PICK 4
RACE 8:

Why mess around, let's just jump right into it. I see this as a two-horse race. #5 Instagrand was the best juvenile in the world last year, and I didn't mind his comeback effort in the Gotham Stakes (G3) one bit. I hope that jockey Flavien Prat sends him, since Instagrand does his best work up front, and we saw in last weekend's Florida Derby (G1) what happens when you choke speed behind a slow pace. Baffert's #6 Game Winner is the most proven horse in the field and should improve off of his last race, but my biggest concern with betting him is that he doesn't need to win here. His goal is not to win the Santa Anita Derby, it's to win the Kentucky Derby, so buyer beware here.

RACE 9:

Ah, a classic known vs. unknown race! Let's lock in the unknowns on the ticket: #8 Hostess and #9 Miss Flawless. Both are coming from overseas and have shown talent. The connections fit and, let's be honest, there is no world-beater here. Of the knowns, #7 Maxim Rate is the most interesting. She's a $235k purchase for Slam Dunk Racing – a very high number for them – and she closed impressively into a moderate pace to score at 28-1 on debut. I won't get that here, but her price should still be square enough to use. I also have to include #6 Colonial Creed, who has consistently improved in her career. She won't mind the added distance, either.

RACE 10:

Oh #1 McKinzie, you are sooooooo a McKinzie. Do I trust you here? Not enough to single. I don't want McKinzie to knock out my ticket, but there is much more value in beating him, so let's use the 1+1 strategy and add the horse I think is most likely to deny McKinzie. That's #4 Gift Box. He's very lightly raced at 6 but has consistently improved. If he can build on his San Antonio Stakes (G2) win, then he is every bit as good as McKinzie, so I'll go two-deep here and hope for the price.

RACE 11:

I'm going to spread a little bit here in order to get this ticket home. I'll start on the outside with #11 Tequila Joe, who should have a hot pace to run down. At 6, he's a little older, but in his third start off of a layoff, a top effort here could be enough to get him home. #8 Inscom is probably the most talented horse and could freak to open his 4-year-old campaign. It's not often that you see an $850k purchase gelded, but that's what happened here after he just missed in the La Jolla Stakes (G3) as a 3-year-old. If he improves, watch out. Right to his inside, #7 Rumpus Cat fits the conditions well. I like him at 1 mile rather than flying down the hill, and rider Joel Rosario should be a perfect fit for his style. I will close the ticket with #3 The Hunted, who was consistent before the layoff and should fire off of the break.

Deep Ticket - $0.50 Pick 4: 5, 6 / 6, 7, 8, 9 / 1, 4 / 3, 7, 8, 11 = $32

Short Ticket - $3 Pick 4: 5 / 6, 7, 8, 9 / 4 / 3, 7, 11 = $36

Good luck and have fun! ■

OVERVIEW:

The Kentucky Derby prep races continue on Saturday with the Blue Grass Stakes, which once again features a full field of 14 entries. This race has more questions than answers, which should make for tremendous betting opportunities. As of now, exactly zero of the 14 horses entered here have enough points to make the Kentucky Derby starting gate, which means that the stakes are ultra-high. Leading the pack are the Fountain of Youth Stakes (G2) third-place finisher Vekoma and the Kentucky Jockey Club Stakes (G2) winner Signalman. However, these two are far from solid favorites, which makes this one of the best prep races of the year as far as wagering is concerned.

RACE SHAPE: LOOKS TO HAVE A MODERATE/FAIR PACE:

Pure Speed: *Somelikeithotbrown, Vekoma, Market King*
Pressing Speed: *Lucky Lee*
Stalkers: *Signalman, Admire, Win Win Win, So Alive, Parsimony, Aquadini*
Closers: *Chess Chief, Dream Maker, Sir Winston, Moonster*

There are a few horses that will want to go in this race; however, none of them are "need the lead" types that will sprint right from the start. The pace should be honest, giving every horse in the race a fair chance. With 14 horses, though, sometimes we can get a few surprises, which does make this pace a little hard to project. At least on paper, no horse seems to have an advantage when it comes to the pace setup.

TOP CHOICE: #8 WIN WIN WIN

This horse deserves one more shot after a wide trip likely cost him a win in the Tampa Bay Derby (G2). Despite that tough journey, he still never quit, getting up for third in the late stages. By drawing post 8, he should sit a bit more comfortably. Imagine: if he had gotten a perfect trip and won the Tampa Bay Derby, then he would easily be the favorite, which means anything at his morning line price of 7/2 or better he is interesting, though he is not playable if his odds get too low, so keep an eye on how he is bet.

MAJOR THREATS: #2 VEKOMA, #3 SIGNALMAN, #6 DREAM MAKER

Vekoma looks like he has a lot to prove, which is why you shouldn't bet him to win at a short price. He exits the Fountain of Youth, where the other horses did not come back to run well in the Florida Derby (G1). Signalman also exits the Fountain of Youth, though it was clearly stated before and after that he needed a race, so he should run better here. Dream Maker had a terrible trip in the Tampa Bay Derby, which means that he could bounce back for a trainer (Mark Casse) who has enjoyed major success at Keeneland.

LONGSHOTS TO USE: #1 SOMELIKEITHOTBROWN, #4 MARKET KING, #9 SIR WINSTON, #10 LUCKY LEE

Somelikeithotbrown is interesting after winning two straight over the synthetic surface at Turfway Park. His pedigree looks like it could go either way, with Big Brown on top and a Tapit mare on the bottom. Market King was a longshot third in one of the Rebel Stakes (G2) divisions and will show early speed. Sir Winston and Lucky Lee exit the Wither Stakes (G3), where they both had poor showings. That race gave them experience at this distance, though, which is a plus.

#5 CHESS CHIEF, #7 ADMIRE, #11 SO ALIVE, #12 PARSIMONY, #13 MOONSER, #14 AQUADINI

Several entries seemed like easy tosses in a race that is tough to predict, which could make this scary. However, even though the race seems wide open, these horses are lacking in the speed figure department. We will need to see a nice improvement from any of these if they want a shot at hitting the board.

PICKS AND PLAYS:

<u>Bet to Win:</u> #8 Win Win Win – Confidence Level: 2 out of 5

<u>Bet to Place or Show:</u> #3 Signalman – Confidence Level: 1 out of 5

<u>Across the Board Longshot Play:</u> #6 Dream Maker – Confidence Level: 1 out of 5

<u>Exacta:</u> 3,6,8 BOX

<u>Trifecta:</u> 2,3,6,8 BOX

<u>Superfecta:</u> 2,3,6,8 BOX

<u>Horses to Use in Multi-Race Wagers:</u> 2,3,6,8

<u>Small Budget Wager:</u> $.50 cent trifecta BOX 2,3,6,8

<u>Large Budget Wager:</u> $2 trifecta BOX 2,3,6,8

OVERVIEW:

Over the years, this event has produced several fillies who would go on to win the Kentucky Oaks. Last year, the stellar Monomoy Girl captured this race before winning at Churchill Downs (and several other tracks, too). The same thing could happen again with this year's winner, courtesy of the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies (G1) champion Jaywalk. However, she must rebound from a pathetic effort last time out in the Davona Dale Stakes (G2) at Gulfstream Park. That is the major storyline coming into this event.

RACE SHAPE: THIS RACE WILL HAVE A MODERATE/FAIR PACE:

Pure Speed: *Bizwhacks, Jaywalk, Feedback*
Pressing Speed: *Lady Kate*
Stalkers: *Restless Rider*
Closers: *Chocolate Kisses, Bell's the One, Out for a Spin*

There is a chance that things could get a little crazy up front, though we will most likely see a moderate pace. Three horse are capable of being in front, but it will likely come down to two. The pure class of graded stakes winners Jaywalk and Feedback will likely put them on the lead, especially with how Jaywalk performed last time out when forced to stalk the pace. We project that she will be sent this time, with Feedback stalking her from second. Those two horses might stay in those spots all the way around the track.

TOP CHOICE: #4 JAYWALK

There is no doubt that she will romp over this field if she bounces back to her normal self. This is the most talented and classy runner in the race, but her 3-year-old debut was not good. After stalking the early pace, she came up very empty in the stretch, finishing off the board in the Davona Dale at odds of 1/9. She's had three solid works since that effort, though, so she should be ready to bounce back.

MAJOR THREATS: #5 FEEDBACK, #6 RESTLESS RIDER

The hype has always been extremely high on Feedback after her impressive maiden special weight romp on debut at Saratoga last August. Those horses always get big-time exposure, especially when trained by guys like Chad Brown. Her next start was also her 3-year-old debut, and while she did win, it was an unimpressive 1/2-length victory in the Forward Gal Stakes (G3). We'll find out what she is all about

here. Restless Rider enters off of a long layoff after running very consistently as a 2-year-old and should fit into this race well.

LONGSHOTS TO USE: #2 CHOCOLATE KISSES, #3 LADY KATE

The Honeybee Stakes (G3) winner Chocolate Kisses will look to make it three in a row in a race that certainly seems to be a lot stronger than her last. She shouldn't get a complete pace meltdown this time around, which is what got her into the winner's circle previously. Lady Kate has just two starts under her belt, winning a maiden special weight at Gulfstream Park before finishing second in the Suncoast Stakes at Tampa Bay Downs.

OTHERS: #1 BIZWHACKS, #7 BELL'S THE ONE, #8 OUT FOR A SPIN

This race looks top-heavy, leaving this group of three without much of a chance to make an impact. The Ashland has been known for upsets in the past, but it doesn't look like that will be the case this year.p up and win.

PICKS AND PLAYS:

Bet to Win: #4 Jaywalk – Confidence Level: 2.5 out of 5

Bet to Place or Show: #5 Feedback – Confidence Level: 2.5 out of 5

Across the Board Longshot Play: #2 Chocolate Kisses – Confidence Level: 1 out of 5

Exacta: 4,5,6 BOX

Trifecta: 4,5/2,4,5,6/2,4,5,6

Superfecta: 2,4,5,6 BOX

Horses to Use in Multi-Race Wagers: 4,5,6

Small Budget Wager: $20 to win on Jaywalk

Large Budget Wager: $40 to win on Jaywal

RACE 8: MADISON STAKES [G1]

7 FURLONGS ON THE DIRT
4-YEAR-OLDS AND UP, FILLIES AND MARES

OVERVIEW:

This 7-furlong event should get interesting in a hurry with a strong field of 9 signed on to take a shot in this ultra-competitive spot. This race annually tends to be one of the best female sprints of the season. The Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Sprint (G1) winner Shamrock Rose is in this field, as well as a host of other fast sprinters. There is no doubt that the champ will have her hands full.

RACE SHAPE: LOOKS LIKE IT WILL HAVE A LONE SPEED:

Pure Speed: *Amy's Challenge*
Pressing Speed: *Late Night Pow Wow, American's Tale*
Stalkers: *Divine Queen, Spiced Perfection,*
Closers: *Sultry, Create a Star, Cathedral Reader, Shamrock Rose*

The other sprint races on this card are loaded with speed, but this race looks completely different. Amy's Challenge may be all alone on the lead, which could make her dangerous. In her two races this year, she was a beast, winning both by multiple lengths under wraps at Oaklawn Park. Last year, she struggled in tougher races like this one, so she must show that she's a different horse, and this pace setup could help. Late Night Pow Wow looks like the only one who could apply any kind of pressure.

TOP CHOICE: #4 AMY'S CHALLENGE

In her two races this season she has been about as dominant as you can get, winning two stakes races at Oaklawn Park by multiple lengths, without being asked for even close to her best. The competition level gets much tougher today, though, which was a major problem for her last season. However, she looks to be a better horse this year, while also looking to have a significant pace advantage over her rivals.

MAJOR THREATS: #5 SPICED PERFECTION, #6 LATE NIGHT POW WOW, #9 SHAMROCK ROSE

What more can you say about Late Night Pow Wow, who has won 11 of her 12 career starts. Last time out, she won the Barbara Fritchie Stakes (G3) over Spiced Perfection, and both are prime contenders here. Of course, you must also throw in Shamrock Rose, who only won the Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Sprint last season. Her class will be tough to beat in this spot.

LONGSHOTS TO USE: #3 DIVINE QUEEN, #8 AMERICA'S TALE

America's Tale is a longshot worth taking a hard look at after she upset Gulfstream Park's Inside Information Stakes (G2) at 11-1 last time out. She has won 4 out of her last 5 starts, with her only loss coming on the turf. Divine Queen has some back class that can make her competitive at a price. She seemed to improve in her last start, finishing second in a Fair Grounds allowance.

OTHERS: #1 SULTRY, #2 CREATE A STAR, #7 CATHEDRAL READER

These horses look like clear tosses against several nice horses who are all in form. Someone winning from this group would be quite surprising.

PICKS AND PLAYS:

Bet to Win: #4 Amy's Challenge – Confidence Level: 2 out of 5

Bet to Place or Show: #9 Shamrock Rose – Confidence Level: 2 out of 5

Across the Board Longshot Play: #6 Late Night Pow Wow – Confidence Level: 2 out of 5

Exacta: 4,6,9 BOX

Trifecta: 4,5,6,9 BOX

Superfecta: 4,5,6,9 BOX

Horses to Use in Multi-Race Wagers: 4,5,6,9

Small Budget Wager: $.50 cent trifecta BOX 4,5,6,9

Large Budget Wager: $2 trifecta BOX 4,5,6,9

OVERVIEW:

A field of 13 speedsters will compete in this grass dash, making it one of the best betting races on the card. The Shakertown is always a launching point for this division, with most of the big turf sprints still ahead in the summer and fall months. Horses from all over the country have shipped in to run, which truly makes it a "Box 'em up and call 'em home" type of affair. Let's hope for prices in this one.

RACE SHAPE: LOOKS TO HAVE A VERY FAST PACE

Pure Speed: *Richard's Boy, Bay Muzik, Square Shooter, Conquest Tsunami, Latent Revenge*
Pressing Speed: *Jazzy Times, Shakhimat*
Stalkers: *Point of Honor, Bound for Nowhere, Imprimis*
Closers: *Disco Partner, Will Call, Chaos Theory, Angaston*

Just like the Commonwealth Stakes (G3) one race earlier, this is going to have a blazing-hot pace. Several horses will want the lead right out of the gate (including the speedy Conquest Tsunami, who enters off of just one week's rest after finishing fifth in the San Simeon Stakes (G3) at Santa Anita Park). Look for the closers to have a great chance to run them down late.

TOP CHOICE: #11 IMPRIMIS

Let's take a shot here with a horse that has had some moments where he has looked very good. Last year, he burst onto the scene with several flashy wins before disappointing on the big stage in the Highlander Stakes (G1) at Woodbine. However, since that race, he was won 2 of 3 starts, including his impressive seasonal debut in Gulfstream Park's Silks Run Stakes. He should sit a perfect trip in this contest, which could make him tough, and he looks poised for a big year.

MAJOR THREATS: #2 RICHARD'S BOY, #3 DISCO PARTNER, #8 CONQUEST TSUNAMI, #9 BOUND FOR NOWHERE

You can't run a turf sprint without trainer Peter Miller, who has two entries in this race. Both of his runners, Richard's Boy and Conquest Tsunami, have plenty of early speed and talent. The latter is coming into this race on short rest, though, which is a concern. Bound for Nowhere seems to always be around in these types of races, while the late-running Disco Partner should have plenty of pace to run at in this event.

LONGSHOTS TO USE: #4 SHAKHIMAT, #6 WILL CALL, #10 LATENT REVENGE

Shakhimat adding blinkers means he will try to get a little bit more involved early in the race. Look for the late-running Will Call to play a factor as well, as trainer Brad Cox always has him ready to run a nice race. Latent Revenge won last time out at Fair Grounds, which should set him up well for a big run here.

OTHERS: #1 JAZZY TIMES, #5 BAY MUZIK, #7 SQUARE SHOOTER, #12 CHAOS THEORY, #13 ANGASTON

The race seems to be pretty top-heavy, with several high-end horses in with a shot. That leaves this group needing to show vast improvement in the speed figure department to have a chance. The one thing that will help get a longshot home is the projected pace, which could make this race a little bit wacky.

PICKS AND PLAYS:

Bet to Win: #11 Imprimis – Confidence Level: 1 out of 5

Bet to Place or Show: #3 Disco Partner – Confidence Level: 2.5 out of 5

Across the Board Longshot Play: #9 Bound for Nowhere – Confidence Level: 1 out of 5

Exacta: 3,9,11 BOX

Trifecta: 3,8,9,11 BOX

Superfecta: 3,8,9,11 BOX

Horses to Use in Multi-Race Wagers: 2,3,6,8,9,11

Small Budget Wager: $.50 trifecta BOX 3,8,9,11

Large Budget Wager: $1 trifecta BOX 3,8,9,11

OVERVIEW:

This race kicks off the tremendous stakes action at Keeneland. A full field of 14 horses have entered this 7-furlong dash, providing plenty of betting options. Several last-out winners have lined up to take a shot at this race, including Recruiting Ready, who was an easy winner last time out at Gulfstream Park. Much like the Shakertown one race later on the card, this is a "Box 'em up and call 'em home" race.

RACE SHAPE: LOOKS TO HAVE A HOT PACE

Pure Speed: *Recruiting Ready, Uncontested, Bobby's Wicked One, Richiesinthehouse*
Pressing Speed: *Copper Town, New York Central*
Stalkers: *Proforma, Runaway Ghost, Warrior's Club*
Closers: *Still Having Fun, Limousine Liberal, Supreme Aura, Uno Mas Modelo, Majestic Dunhill*

Look for them to blaze in this event. Several horses want the lead, including the speedy Recruiting Ready, who might be the fastest of the bunch. However, Uncontested can really fly on the front end as well, and Richiesinthehouse and Bobby's Wicked One have proven to be quick out of the gate in their own rights. This race definitely sets up perfectly for closers, which could make Limousine Liberal tough to hold off down the lane.

TOP CHOICE: #6 LIMOUSINE LIBERAL

This horse keeps getting better with age. Last year was the best of his career, which all started with a runner-up effort in this race. The 2019 edition's pace sets up perfectly for him, with several horses likely to blaze up front. If that happens, it will make his late closing kick extremely difficult to hold off. His workouts leading up to this race suggest that he is ready to kick off his 7-year-old season with a bang.

MAJOR THREATS: #1 COPPER TOWN, #2 RECRUITING READY, #4 UNCONTESTED, #5 STILL HAVING FUN, #10 RUNAWAY GHOST, #11 BOBBY'S WICKED ONE

Several horses in this race are in with a shot, which means that you have to go deep in your multi-race tickets here. Recruiting Ready, Uncontested, Runaway Ghost, and Bobby's Wicked One are all exiting impressive victories in their last

races. The only bad news for these horses is that they could all get caught up in a wicked pace duel. Still Having Fun had a disappointing debut to his 4-year-old season last out, but he could rebound here. The Todd Pletcher-trained Copper Town has talent, but he has had problems getting out of the gate in his recent efforts.

LONGSHOTS TO USE: #9 NEW YORK CENTRAL, #13 WARRIOR'S CLUB, #14 MAJESTIC DUNHILL

If you are looking for prices, then this is the race for you! The projected pace setup could make something crazy happen. Majestic Dunhill and New York Central could have a chance if they can sit a nice stalking trip. Warrior's Club was able to capture this race last year at big odds.

OTHERS: #7 SUPREME AURA, #8 UNO MAS MODELO, #12 RICHIESINTHEHOUSE, #3 PROFORMA

Even the four horses in this group are not without a chance in this wide-open affair. Supreme Aura's late closing kick will be interesting to watch in this spot, and Richiesinthehouse has shown solid ability, just not yet on dirt. Those two could make some noise, given the right circumstances.

PICKS AND PLAYS:

<u>Bet to Win:</u> #6 Limousine Liberal – Confidence Level: 1 out of 5

<u>Bet to Place or Show:</u> #2 Recruiting Ready – Confidence Level: 1 out of 5

<u>Across the Board Longshot Play:</u> #10 Runaway Ghost – Confidence Level: 1 out of 5

<u>Exacta:</u> 2,4,6 BOX

<u>Trifecta:</u> 2,4,6,11 BOX

<u>Superfecta:</u> 2,4,6,11 BOX

<u>Horses to Use in Multi-Race Wagers:</u> 1,2,4,5,6,9,10,11

<u>Small Budget Wager:</u> $.50 cent trifecta BOX 2,4,6,11

<u>Large Budget Wager:</u> $1 trifecta BOX 2,4,6,11