SANTA ANITA ANALYSIS

BY BRAD FREE

BEST BET: RACE 7, SOUTHERN TREASURE

FIRST RACE
This maiden-claiming turf route is a scramble; second-time starter **JOERAY** is the tepid call stretching out and switching to grass after a respectable debut. JOERAY was blocked behind runners coming off the turn, dove inside, and finished evenly. Good effort, albeit maiden-30 sprint. Tough to win a route second out following just one sprint, but this field is relatively weak. **JUMP THE TRACKS** goes long for the first time. The even-paced running style he showed in three sprints suggests two turns might be his trip. This is his second start since he was gelded, and his first start for a claim tag. RUSTIC CANYON set a fast pace last out in a state-bred maiden turf route, and surrendered. Blinkers off, entered for tag, chance up front if he rations his speed. **STUDLY PERFECTION** makes his first start since he was gelded. HEAT THINGS UP, full sibling to graded winner Majestic Heat (potential La Canada favorite on Saturday), might like two turns.

SECOND RACE
DADLANI can win this maiden-20 route for fillies and mares if she reproduces her runner-up debut in September. Freshened nearly three months, the lightly raced (two starts) mare meets a dismal field. She runs well fresh. **PRINCESS NICOLE** finished in the money three of her last five, while **HOPE SHE WILL** ran races last spring and summer that would be good enough. Final-time prediction for this one-mile dirt race: 1:41 and change.

THIRD RACE
This maiden-claiming turf route is the filly-mare version of race 1. **PADDY JEAN**, a 10-start maiden with four straight in-the-money finishes including a special-weight at Golden Gate last out, is the one to beat. Her speed figures are appropriate for this class, she has run well on the Santa Anita course and she could get a nice trip positioned second or third behind the speed. **HALO AHEAD** is a late threat, returning to maiden-50. She hit the board three of her last four vs. open and/or Cal-bred special-weight maidens. The Santa Anita turf course played fair to all running styles the first two weeks of the meet; we'll see if the "no-bias profile" continues following rain that was forecast this week. **ARROWSPHERE**, beaten favorite three of her last four, in the money all five starts on the Santa Anita turf, will be forwardly placed. VICTORIA FALLS looms the upset candidate from the back of the pack. She is a lightly raced 6yo maiden; her two starts in summer 2016 make her a longshot threat. TELL ME MORE stretches out and has good speed to be involved from the get-go.

FOURTH RACE
REVENUE VIRGINIUS is the "best horse" in this $25k claiming sprint. The challenge is to reproduce top form first start off the layoff. She was re-claimed in May for $40k by Jerry Hollendorfer, who won with 4 of his last 10 starters in Southern California that were off at least six months. Not a fan of the claim-and-drop move, particularly after an eight-month layoff, but works and Hollendorfer comeback stats suggest 'VIRGINIUS will fire first start back. **PRINCESS KENDRA** was claimed from an upset win last out in a Cal-bred N1X/optional $20k claiming. Trainer Vladimir Cerin won with 5 of his last 10 starters first off the claim. **STURDY ONE** scratched from a $25k claiming turf sprint Sunday to run instead on the main track. Curious scratch, since it seems she prefers turf over dirt. Contender if she takes to the footing. BE A LADY missed by a half-length last out at Los Al, she is 3-for-6 at Santa Anita.

FIFTH RACE
This maiden special-weight for 3yo fillies is the best race on the card. It is a close call between second-time starter **GRACIOUS ME** and first-timer **MS DUPREE**. The call goes to the experienced filly. GRACIOUS ME produced speed throughout and finished second in a promising debut. The race was run in relatively fast time; the 80 Beyer she earned might be enough. However, first-time starter MS DUPREE has been training like she means business. Sired by promising first-crop sire Violence (20 percent debut winners), MS DUPREE is a sibling to four multiple winners (five overall); her works suggest she will fire first time out. The past four months, the trainer-jockey combo of Phil D'Amato and Evin Roman are 5-for-11. First-time starter **GOZEN** is the first runner produced by the fast allowance-caliber filly My Philly Girl; FLAMMETTA makes her debut for a stable that usually races its maidens into condition rather than win first time out. However, progeny of the sire Wildcat Heir have won 16 percent first time out.

SIXTH RACE
Older maidens bred in California go six furlongs; first-time starter **ANIMO** gets the call based on works, pedigree and rivals that appear ordinary. Sired by Into Mischief, ANIMO is the second foal produced by Hello Sugar, a debut winner herself for trainer Marty Jones and owner-breeder Pam Ziebarth. Hello Sugar is a sibling to G1 winner Tiz Flirtatious; the first foal from Hello Sugar needed six starts, two turns and turf to win, but ANIMO debuts against a nondescript bunch with a series of fast works at Los Al. **QUICK FINISH** improved second out, runner-up while more than seven lengths clear of third. Fast works since, all at Santa Anita. **WILD LANDO** finished in the money all three starts and should find a field he can beat sooner or later. EASTER MORN appears to have trained well for his first start in nearly two years.

SEVENTH RACE
SOUTHERN TREASURE looks solid in this sprint for $8k claiming fillies and mares. She won 8 of 15 last year including her most recent at Los Alamitos, she has tactical speed and a pressing style, and earned figures last summer that rank among the tops in this field. The mare's trainer Rosemary Trela won with 24 percent of her starters the past four years, producing a flat-bet profit ($2.50 return for each $2 win bet). **LUCKY STUDENT** is the one to catch, possibly a favorite second start back from a layoff. She dueled on a fast pace in her comeback, and tired late. With that race under her belt, she has a shot to wire the field. **WHERE'S THE D** was reported as a vet scratch from race 8 on Dec. 14. She came back with a solid workout pattern, and looms a contender based on her form in summer and fall.

EIGHTH RACE
TUSCANY BEAUTY drops to $16k claiming N3L; she finished second her only previous start at this level. She faces a challenging pace scenario, however. There is plenty of speed in this six-furlong race. **POMP AND PARTY** figures as a contender off her most recent start, a front-running score in a claiming race for 3yos. The filly she beat, Dangerously Close, returned to win a starter allowance by five lengths with an 81 Beyer. **RIZZI'S HONORS** drops in class and is likely to adopt an off-the-pace strategy in this pace-filled lineup. It is unclear if she is as effective rallying from behind; she probably will be out-footed early. She ran well here last April in a similar situation. WINNER'S DREAMS drops in class, goes route to sprint, and will rally late. However, generally speaking, these David Jacobson-trained droppers are dubious propositions.