

SANTA ANITA ANALYSIS



BY BRAD FREE

BEST BET: RACE 2, BATIQUITOS

FIRST RACE

GOSEECAL drew outside in this eight-runner turf mile, but nonetheless is the one to beat dropping for the first time into a claiming race. She has nibbled vs. better company, trainer Vladimir Cerin has been hot (12-5-4-0 into Thursday). All systems go for **GOSEECAL**, despite the outside draw. **WAR MOCCASIN** returns to the \$50k claiming level of her best recent finish, runner-up last summer in a race from which she was claimed by Jerry Hollendorfer. Her three recent N1X starts were okay; this is her level. Seems the Hollendorfer-Rafael Bejarano combo could be heating up again. **AURA ROSE** had a tough trip last out, beaten less than two lengths in a starter allowance vs. older. Back with claiming 4yos, obvious contender saving ground forwardly placed. At some point, she'll need to get outside. That might be an adventure. Also-eligible **CYNTHIANA** has upset potential. She faced older allowance foes last time, now first-time tag. No data on this trainer-jockey combo.

SECOND RACE

Potentially compromised by rail draw, **BATIQUITOS** is otherwise solid in this Cal-bred allowance sprint. She was an impressive maiden winner this track last spring; her recent runner-up comeback (turf) was super. Blocked from quarter pole to deep stretch, finished with run and galloped out great. That was a five-furlong turf sprint, she benefits moving to six on dirt. Martin Pedroza takes over for Bejarano. **BRIARTIC GAL** returns from a short respite with a chance, even if she is a 7yo with just career win. In the money all three starts this track, this is only her second try since changing trainers. Blinkers on, works look good (on paper), should fire her best shot first start back. This is not a particularly tough state-bred allowance. **DANGEROUSLY CLOSE** blazed to a high-figure romp last out at Los Al. She was first off the claim that day for trainer Genaro Vallejo (18 for 61 past three months, all tracks). 'CLOSE could wire these if able to reproduce her highly rated Los Al romp that already was validated when third-place finisher Lil Grazen ran back and won Jan. 1. **BETDESILVERGOLD** is speed, enough to keep 'CLOSE honest. Her career-best figure was earned the last time she sprinted on this track.

THIRD RACE

In his only previous start for trainer Kristin Mulhall last summer at Del Mar, the gelding **OUT OF PATIENCE** crushed a similar field. He returns from a six-week layoff, Mulhall first off the claim again, to a track on which he won five races. Already an 11-time winner, he is solid first start back. **SAINT DERMOT** finished in front of the top choice last out, so obviously merits respect despite a 4-for-32 career record. He does not exactly win his share, but if the top choice is a "good thing," then so must be the horse he finished behind. **STORM COMIN THRU** is a well-named older gelding whose most recent win was on a "wet fast" Santa Anita track two years ago. 'STORM goes second off the claim, entered back for the same claim price although facing open company rather than state-breds. **AWE** might be ranked too low by this handicapper. Up in class first off the claim by Hollendorfer, he returns to the footing (dirt) on which he is 2-for-3. No knocks, logical contender.

FOURTH RACE

The speedster **PURE PURSUIT** takes a mega-drop from special-weight to maiden-20. It is a maneuver trainer John Sadler has employed with success. The past five years, Sadler is 4-for-6 with older horses dropping from MSW to maiden-20. **MILHAUD** takes a similar drop, with one big difference. **MILHAUD** has been running on turf and therefore is uncertain to be as effective on dirt. He has speed; he and the top choice potentially could duel. **DUDE'S DUDE** drops to the bottom for the first time, and could fall into a great trip just in behind the top pair. If those two hook up, 'DUDE might be in a perfect spot to pounce. **MAGICAL MORE** will be rolling from behind in a race that just might set up for his style. Good spot for a potential stretch-running maiden win.

FIFTH RACE

Also-eligible **RADISH** is the pick if she draws in. Though she is a 12-start maiden, she placed in two Cal-bred stakes last year, and returns against Cal-bred maidens. Her pressing/stalking style is good for the hill; outside post a theoretical benefit for her comeback. This is her first start since May. **GET YOURSELF HOME** should have won her debut, but she had a brutal trip. Runner-up at odds-on after breaking dead last, the question is the quality of that field she faced, which was not much. Still, 'HOME inherits horse-to-beat status if top pick does not draw in. **MY AUNT TILLIE** returns from a layoff, will be rallying from the back. Her trainer popped with a comeback maiden in a downhill turf sprint here one year ago; Winemenow paid \$39.60 first start in a year and a half. The knock on 'TILLIE is she is a nine-start maiden.

SIXTH RACE

BACKINTHEACADEMY won by eight lengths the last time she raced on this track, in October. She drops from claiming starter to \$8k claiming, is a three-time winner on this track and should win if she returns to her previous Santa Anita form. **HONOR MAKER** bounced last time, when she wheeled back only 18 days after the top effort of her career. Now freshened nearly three months, she should run her best race first start back. **OPTIMISTIC OUTCOME**, in the money 17 of 19 on dirt, is usually reliable to complete the exacta/trifecta behind one of the others including **SHESWILDFREE**, **FORBIDDEN COMMAND** and **SWISS SKIMMER**.

SEVENTH RACE

FULL ACCESS had to make a premature middle move last time, and the tactics worked. He went from fifth to first on the backstretch, and maintained his advantage to the wire. That was first-off-the-claim by Cerin. Now 'ACCESS has had two months between starts, returns in a N1X for state-breds, and catches a field without speed. He could find himself setting or pressing modest fractions. Either way, he'll get the jump on the closers. Lightly raced, improving gelding going up the ladder. **THE BIG TRAIN** has one win, five seconds. He is usually close, always finishes, and can win if his move is timed to perfection. That is easier said than done. Look for him late. **DR. TROUTMAN** had a brutal trip last time, in fall at Del Mar. He changes jockeys, to Mike Smith. **SIX POINT RACK**, similar in ability to 'BIG TRAIN, has enough speed to be forwardly placed in a slow-pace race. This might be one of those. 'RACK might be ranked too low by this handicapper.

EIGHTH RACE

DIALED TO GO is the choice to upset likely favorite **CONDI**. However, the outcome depends on whether or not **DIALED TO GO** can be comfortable positioned behind the speed. If so, she could get a great trip sitting second. If and win the speed stops, **DIALED TO GO** can go on with it. Her best race was on this track in fall. **CONDI** is the speed, the "class" while dropping from maiden-50 to maiden-30, and a logical contender to wire the field at low odds. **TINY TINA** prepped in a special-weight turf sprint, now maiden-30 dirt for her second start. Improvement is highly likely with a race under her belt and the class drop.