

Date: February 10, 2019 Track: Santa Anita

By Brad Free

BEST BET: Getaloadofthis (3rd race)

#### First Race

1. Onthewaytonevrland 2. Vantastic 3. Urban Light

Florida-based ONTHEWAYTONEVRLAND shipped to California for the Baffle Stakes that was scheduled for last weekend on the hill. The turf sprint was postponed due to rain, then the race was scrapped due to insufficient entries. Hence, 'NEVRLAND shows up in this N1X downhill dash. He appears to have worked well since a maiden win two months ago at Gulfstream Park, though the subsequent odds-on defeat by the runner-up does not exactly flatter his form. Regardless, the lightly raced gelding has speed, he ran well both starts, and runs well fresh. VANTASTIC has something the top choice lacks. That is, proven form on the hill. He won a downhill maiden race three back, and finished second in a first-level allowance on the hill last out. No published works since his race a month ago is curious. URBAN LIGHT makes his U.S. debut; he was a vet scratch Jan. 11. Front-runners STUBBINS and DIAMOND BLITZ will keep the pace honest.

#### Second Race

1. Run Macho Run 2. Stringent 3. Baby Bear's Soup

Northern California-based RUN MACHO RUN is worth backing to upset likely favorite STRINGENT. The current form by 'MACHO RUN is solid; he won 2 of his last six and finished in the money 9 of his last 10. He handles any and all footing, and there is enough pace here to flatter his closing style. However, STRINGENT will be tough if he reproduces his last-start win at a slightly lower claiming level. The gelding is 4-for-9 at Santa Anita, he has speed, and he is versatile. The only significant knock is price. Due to speed figures that top the field, his odds are likely to be low. BABY BEAR'S SOUP looms a contender based on high-figure wins in October and November. His two recent starts were not "fast," but he will be running late in a race that could unfold at a solid pace. PAPA TURF adds speed, along with BLESS HIS HEART.

#### Third Race

1. Getaloadofthis 2. Temple Knights 3. Captain N. Barron

GETALOADOFTHIS is the most probable winner on the card; shortening from one mile to five and one-half furlongs in this \$16k maiden-claiming sprint. He dueled on a relatively fast pace last time going a

mile, hung tough to deep stretch, then tired to finish third. The horse he battled and put away last out (Bless His Heart) returned to wire maiden-16s in his next start, thereby flattering the effort by GETALOADOFTHIS. He has a series of sharp works since raced, meets modest rivals, and looks formidable with a front-running/pace-pressing trip. TEMPLE KNIGHTS is an off-the-pace upset candidate. He found himself on the front end last time in a maiden-12.5k at Golden Gate, and tired. He runs best rallying from behind. With patient handling and a weight break with the circuit's top apprentice, he merits a longshot look. CAPTAIN N. BARRON is a 16-start maiden that lost three straight photos. Blinkers off this time. DOHENY BEACH will pick them up late.

#### Fourth Race

1. Lucky Val    2. Trappiza    3. Cee Sam's Girl

Three of the six entered in this N2L claiming route exit the same grim race run on Jan. 11. Perhaps the right call is take a stand against that low-rated affair, and back stretch-outs LUCKY VAL and/or TRAPPIZA. Neither is proven around two turns, perhaps neither will stay the trip. Nonetheless, they are "new" to this level (route), and meet slow rivals. LUCKY VAL is not quick enough to sprint, and though she finished next-to-last in her only route, her recent start was okay. She is worth a shot on the stretch-out, same as TRAPPIZA. The latter wheels back in one week for trainer Mike Pender, who scored recently with back-in-a-week winner Queen Bee to You. If the top pair fall short, then Jan. 11 runner-up CEE SAM'S GIRL could slog out the win. She is a 1-for-21 grinder.

#### Fifth Race

1. Swirling    2. Red Shelby    3. Christy Jackson

Ten-pound apprentice jockey Juan Carlos Diaz has arrived from Puerto Rico; he lands a "live" starter in this five-furlong turf sprint in class dropper SWIRLING. The lightly raced mare runs well fresh, and slides from N2X to \$20k claiming for her first start since October. She scratched from a \$40k claiming race Jan. 12 due to "off turf." This abbreviated turf sprint will be run on the main turf oval; SWIRLING ran well twice at this five-furlong trip on the flat at Del Mar. RED SHELBY is pure speed, and a threat to wire the field. She dueled and cracked last time, but was claimed by Jerry Hollendorfer and returns to the surface and distance of her most recent victory last summer at Del Mar. Win or lose, she is the one to catch. CHRISTY JACKSON is mostly unproven on turf, but her current form is solid. She won a N3L claiming race last time on dirt, and goes first off the claim by high-percent f.o.c. trainer Steve Miyadi.

#### Sixth Race

1. Carribean Colours    2. Tanker    3. Rockandahardplace

CARRIBEAN COLOURS drops to \$20k maiden-claiming for the second start of his career. He finished nowhere first out, but he faced much stronger maiden special-weight rivals (Nolo Contesto, Omaha Beach) than these. If he has any ability whatsoever, which is uncertain, he can win this basement-level

route. TANKER stretches back out to a mile and will be forwardly placed, while ROCKANDAHARDPLACE adds blinkers and Lasix, and drops to the bottom for the first time. Kind of a weak race.

#### Seventh Race

1. Apache Princess      2. Thriving      3. Nomizar

If this turf sprint for 3yo fillies is run on the hillside turf course as scheduled, then horse-for-course specialist APACHE PRINCESS looms the deserving favorite to become the meet's first three-time winner. She does like the hill. Decisive maiden winner two back on the hill, she subsequently trounced first-level allowance fillies by more than three lengths on the hill. Her main rival could be route-to-sprint THRIVING, who had a rocky trip in her U.S. debut in November, then improved significantly in her second local start when she finished third in a turf stakes at a mile. Since then, she posted a series of short, sharp workouts as she hones her speed. Both victories last year as a 2yo in England were sprints. Maybe this is what she wants. If wet weather forces this race to be run on the main track, NOMIZAR could be gone. She caught a "wet-fast" dirt track last out, opened up on a sizzling early pace and wired maidens. Win or lose, the likely pacesetter she the one to catch. GINGER NUT makes her U.S. debut for winning connections.

#### Eighth Race

1. Sparky Ville      2. Savagery      3. Coliseum

Based on raw ability and historical predictability of this 3yo sprint stakes (favorites won 10 of last 20), the field's lone gray might be tough as the chalk. However, this seven-furlong sprint is the right spot for SPARKY VILLE to spring an upset. He improved after being gelded in late September; he won a restricted sprint stakes and finished a creditable third in a G3 sprint. His most recent start in a turf route will be disregarded. SPARKY VILLE shortens to his preferred one-turn trip, he has tactical speed to be forwardly placed, and he does like the Santa Anita main track (two wins, one second). Tab for a small surprise. SAVAGERY returned to a sprint last out and trounced allowance foes. He and the top choice are evenly matched, having traded decisions last fall. SAVAGERY's sprint form is outstanding, two wins and two seconds his last four, he also has a look at an upset. COLISEUM is the aforementioned gray that might have the most raw ability in the field, and he is in a race that favorites have won more than their fair share. His debut was outstanding, he disappointed next out when he stretched to a route, broke slowly and finished sixth. The thing is, COLISEUM is habitually slow from the gate. He broke slowly both recent gate works (viewed on XBTV.com), and his odds could be lower than deserved. COLISEUM can win comfortably if he runs back to his smashing debut. But from a betting perspective, the low-odds gray is worth trying to beat. DESSMAN won his debut by more than seven lengths. This stakes race was last won by a second-time starter in 1994 (Fly'n J. Bryan).

#### Ninth Race

1. Fiery Lady      2. Helen's Tiger      3. Animosity

Third last out in a \$150k stakes from which the runner-up already returned to win, FIERY LADY is the logical choice in this N1X scheduled for six and a half on the hill. The veteran mare's turf record is outstanding (5-for-8), her speed figures are among the tops in the field, and based on her most recent start she has enough tactical speed to stay in contention in a field without much true speed. Runners from this stable tend to be over-bet/under-valued, but if 'LADY repeats her most recent she should be tough to beat. HELEN'S TIGER has been stuck at the first allowance condition since last summer, but her runner-up finish last out was decent. She does not exactly possess a win spirit, however. ANIMOSITY finally returns to the allowance ranks after facing tough company most every start since last spring. She won her debut on this downhill course, and will be rolling late. The tepid pace scenario does her no favors, but it does benefit BATIQUITOS. The latter will be forwardly placed, setting or pressing a likely moderate tempo.