



THE PICK 4 MATRIX

By Frank R. Scatoni

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NOTE: Because this analysis is posted in advance, always check my Twitter feed [@ScatoniSureShot](#) for real-time updates based on scratches and track conditions—as this analysis is written for surfaces that are fast and firm. Thanks!

INTRO

There's a lot going on today! It's Groundhog Day, for starters. Numerologists will revel in the fact that today is a rare palindromic date: 02022020. It's the Super Bowl. And it's James Joyce's birthday! That's a lot of activity for one day, which is why Santa Anita will have an early first post of 11:35 a.m. to accommodate all of the other festivities on this most hallowed of days. Let's see if we can end the week with another winning combo, as this Late Pick 4 will begin in Race 4 of the seven-race card. Good luck!

LEG 1 (R4):

Today's sequence begins with a \$62.5K optional-claiming/N2X for fillies and mares going 9-furlongs with the rail at 10-feet.

#1 OPUS WON (8/5) is your deserving morning-line favorite off a sharp N1X win last time when being sent off at 5/1. It was a nice race, but she beat a pretty weak group and will now have to string two winning races together—something she's been unable to do. She's obvious, but I'll look for someone else to be better than she will be today, given her short price. GRADE: B.

#2 WICKED OLD FASHION (5/1) just ran around the track last time at this level, sitting off a slow pace and never having anything to run at in that mile race. There should be an honest clip in here, even though it's a short field, and her finishing ability is good enough for her to make some noise late. GRADE: B.

#3 **DON'T BLAME JUDY (5/2)** gets a massive jock upgrade from Victor Espinoza to Umberto Rispoli. I say that because Espinoza is not very good with off-the-pace runners, while Rispoli knows how to make the most of a horse's running style. This gal has the best late kick in the field, and she should really relish the class relief after running a creditable fourth against much better Grade 3 animals. Do note that Harmless beat her two back, but that came at the shorter mile distance after Harmless was allowed to crawl on the lead. GRADE: A.

#4 ANGEL ALESSANDRA (5/1) has tactical speed, so she should be leading the way, even with the blinkers off. She too gets some class relief after running a weakening fifth against restricted stakes foes last time in her first start for Baltas (while coming off an August layoff). Nothing in her previous form suggests she wants any part of 9-furlongs, but Baltas has an uncanny knack for getting distance-challenged turf horses (North County Guy, anyone?) to win longer turf races. Rosario's sticking around is interesting as well. GRADE: B.

#5 HARMLESS (5/2) was gifted a win at this level two back, allowed to set a glacial pace on a speed-favoring turf course at Del Mar. Last time, she set another slow pace in the Frankel (G3) but was inhaled late by several other foes, including today's rival Don't Blame Judy. I think Cedillo will clear early



and angle over—and then this gal’s trip is really dependent on what Angel Alessandra does. Still, even if she’s allowed to walk the dog, I think someone will prove better than she is. GRADE: C.

LEG 2 (R5):

Today’s second leg is a \$40K optional-claiming/N1X contested at 6-furlongs on the main track.

#1 SOLDIER BOY (2/1), a pretty great song by The Shirelles, has speed, and he’ll have to use it from the rail, something he did last time when he set the pace and got edged late when going 6.5-furlongs. The cutback will help his cause, and it’s nice to see Rosario stick around, but this guy will face some heat to his outside. GRADE: B.

#2 MAKE IT A TRIPLE (15/1) is a cool old boy who has earned \$200K the hard way, showing up for work and picking up checks. He has a few good races at this level, but he hasn’t really been able to break through, and that’s partly because he’s not the best breaker in the world. That said, he is a grinder, so he will try his heart out to the wire, and if the logical, speedier horses, duel each other into submission, this guy could easily pick up a slice. GRADE: C.

#3 TIGER DAD (3/1) has speed and is drawn outside Soldier Boy, so he’ll be able to put the heat on that foe, who finished behind this guy last time. As most of you know, I’m not the biggest Espinoza fan, but I will say this: he’s still one of the best with horses who have this kind of forwardly placed running style. He’ll make sure Tiger Dad is in the race and ready to pounce. GRADE: B.

#4 HECK YEAH (5/2) re-adds blinkers for his first start since last March, where he never really got untracked when racing at this level and losing to his stablemate. The freshening should do this 5-year-old good, since his two races last year didn’t quite live up to the promise he once showed as a 3-year-old. Baffert can have them ready to roll, and the fact that this guy is drawn outside his main rivals gives him an edge. GRADE: A.

#5 CITY RAGE (5/1) is coming off an October layoff, and he’s a horse whose best work has come going longer on turf. Normally I’d say that this was a prep race for something else next time, but it is interesting to see Prat stick around. I still think it’s a prep race, but this guy hinted at ability last year, and if he’s matured at all from three-years-old to four, then he could surprise everyone by running them down late. GRADE: C.

#6 STREET VISION (15/1) tailed off in 2018 after leaving the Jacobson barn—and then his one start in 2019 was a poor one at 36/1. I’m not sure this 7-year-old belongs at this level right now, but there was a time when he ran some big races, if you’re a believer. GRADE: X.

#7 IT’S TIZ TIME (6/1) came off a year layoff to win a really weak starter-allowance at Del Mar, basically just inheriting the lead as everyone in front of him fell apart. He was 74/1 that day, so no one was expecting a win. He’s needed a little time since then, which is a bit worrisome, and I’d be surprised if he showed up and ran a corker today at this level. That said, if he gets a pace collapse, it could be déjà vu all over again. GRADE: X.

LEG 3 (R6):

Today’s third leg is a competitive \$62.5K optional-claiming/N2X for fillies and mares going 5.5-furlongs on the lawn with the rails at 10-feet.

#1 MISCHIFFIE (IRE) (4/1) has a nice closing kick, so you can expect Van Dyke to rate her inside from off the pace and then look for something to open up late. She’ll need a little luck, since there isn’t a ton of speed in here, but she certainly fits. GRADE: B.

#2 LUCKY PERIDOT (5/1) sports a solid angle: tactical turf-route speed cutting back to this elongated sprint—so I’m very interested in using her at this price. It’s odd that both of her wins have



come on dirt, but her turf races aren't bad, and she should be sitting on a peak effort cutting back and making the second start of her form cycle. GRADE: A.

#3 AN EDDIE SURPRISE (8/1) rarely runs a bad race, so she'll have every chance to do the business today, getting a similar trip as she did two back when beating N1X foes. She does have a tendency to get outfinished late, but perhaps she's reinvented herself as a track-and-pounce sprinter. GRADE: B.

#4 HOLLY HUNDY (5/2) was very unlucky last time when "finishing" third behind two of today's foes (one of whom was disqualified). She had trouble in the race, and she was certainly good enough to win, going off as the 19/10 favorite. Rosario will have a chance to make amends today. GRADE: A.

#5 DEL MAR MAY (5/1) is an X-factor in here because she's never been on turf before. That said, there is ability here, and her connections have always thought she was graded-stakes caliber, so she brings a little class to the proceedings. Still, her best races have come with perfect, in-the-clear tracking trips, and I'm not sure how she'll trip out in here while going this short on the turf. It wouldn't shock me if she pulled off the upset, but I prefer others. GRADE: B.

#6 STORMING LADY (7/2) "won" this exact race last time but was disqualified for shenanigans in the lane. The bumbling Bejarano has now been replaced by the steady hand of Flavien Prat, so the outcome could be different (yet the same!). She'll get a tracking trip from off the pace, and it's obvious how well she fits here, but I like my "A's" a little bit better. GRADE: B.

#7 DEVILS DANCE (6/1) was lucky to get the "win" via DQ last time, since she was probably third best in the race—but kudos to her for showing her sharp early speed and hanging around late to get the nod when Storming Lady was taken down. Velez will blast hard from the gate yet again, but I think last time was the time to have her at 46/1. GRADE: C.

LEG 4 (R7):

We ride into the Super Bowl with a Cal-bred \$50K maiden-claimer for 3-year-old fillies contested at 6-furlongs on the main track.

#1 H AND R'S GIRL (6/1) is a first-time starter for Eric Kruljac, who rarely has them fully cranked. The rail draw doesn't help a debut runner, and this \$32K purchase will have to be fit off just Los Al works. GRADE: C.

#2 LA CROIX (9/5) was 7/1 at this level two back at Del Mar, and she attended a decent pace before getting edged late to dead-heat for place. She then showed speed again against MSWs but was easily beaten last time up north. Catch her if you can. GRADE: A.

#3 EXCESS COIL (30/1) was 31/1 in her debut at this level, but after a slow beginning, she barely raised a gallop. She looks to need lesser. GRADE: X.

#4 RSTARS AND STRIPES (4/1) debuts for Mulhall, and she can pop every now and again with a first-time starter. The works are steady, and Rosario bothers to ride. Can you say "live"? GRADE: A.

#5 REDS TRIBAL HEART (8/1) cost \$1,200 and is running for \$50K. I have to think this one is destined for night racing at some point, though trainer Lisa Bernard is certainly making the most of limited opportunities. GRADE: X.

#6 SMART GIRL (6/1), the second Kruljac runner, dueled 3-wide last time and weakened to finish a well-beaten fourth. She can certainly improve off that, especially with a positive jock change to Rispoli today. GRADE: B.

#7 SONGBIRD EYDIE (8/1) is a debut runner from a very good Los Al trainer, so we'll see if that conditioner can have one ready to run at 6-furlongs today. I'll watch and see. GRADE: X.



#8 AWESOME ALESSANDRA (4/1) has sharp early speed, but she hasn't been able to carry that speed through the wire, settling for a few minor awards. Maybe now that she's drawn outside, Roman can get her to settle a little bit and finish more strongly, but her repeated late fades are becoming a problem at this level. GRADE: C.

SUGGESTED WAGERS

Today's **MATRIX** costs a modest **\$65**, but you should play your top-line combos a few extra times, since the sequence looks fairly formful. Remember: whatever you choose to do: only play what you're comfortable spending or create your own Ticketmaker play here: <https://ticketmaker.drf.com/>. For more info about **OptixEQ**, please visit and register at <https://www.optixeq.com/>.

[SCROLL DOWN FOR **MATRIX**!]

Keep in mind: I don't add "Also Eligibles" to the matrix, so if they draw in, be sure to include them on all of your tickets!

Race #	A	B	C	X
4	3	1 2 4	5	
5	4	1 3	2 5	6 7
6	2 4	1 3 5 6	7	
7	2 4	6	1 8	3 5 7

Below are your tickets based on your horse and budget selections above.
You can continue to add, remove, or re-categorize horses and your tickets below will automatically adjust.

Bet Type	Ticket	Race 4	Race 5	Race 6	Race 7	\$ per Bet	Cost of Ticket	Emphasize
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All A Entries	1	3	4	2,4	2,4	\$0.50	\$2.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A's with One B	2	1,2,4	4	2,4	2,4	\$0.50	\$6.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	3	3	1,3	2,4	2,4	\$0.50	\$4.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	4	3	4	1,3,5,6	2,4	\$0.50	\$4.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	5	3	4	2,4	6	\$0.50	\$1.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A's with Two ...	6	1,2,4	1,3	2,4	2,4	\$0.50	\$12.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	7	1,2,4	4	1,3,5,6	2,4	\$0.50	\$12.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	8	1,2,4	4	2,4	6	\$0.50	\$3.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	9	3	1,3	1,3,5,6	2,4	\$0.50	\$8.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	10	3	1,3	2,4	6	\$0.50	\$2.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	11	3	4	1,3,5,6	6	\$0.50	\$2.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A's with One C	12	5	4	2,4	2,4	\$0.50	\$2.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	13	3	2,5	2,4	2,4	\$0.50	\$4.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	14	3	4	7	2,4	\$0.50	\$1.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	15	3	4	2,4	1,8	\$0.50	\$2.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
Total:						\$65.00		