



THE PICK 4 MATRIX

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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

It's a holiday extravaganza! Today is Valentine's Day and Monday is Presidents' Day—so that means four days of racing, Friday through Monday, to celebrate the holiday weekend. Today's Pick 4 has pretty good potential, with some big fields and challenging races. Just a note: today's card has eight races and a first post of 1:00 p.m. The Late Pick 4 will begin in Race 5.

LEG 1 (R5):

We begin today's proceedings with a Cal-bred \$20K optional-claiming/N1X for fillies and mares going 6-furlongs on the main track.

#1 LUCKY MS JONES (8/1) has no early speed and is coming out of route races, so she will be outpaced early—will there be enough speed in here to set things up for her late kick? Well, her stablemate has speed, giving D'Amato a one-two punch with runners of differing styles, but this gal looks like she's going to have too much to do too late. That said, Rosario—who is the best closer in the business—takes the call. GRADE: C.

#2 TIME FOR SUZZIE (5/1), who just ran second at this level last time, is a bit of a one-paced grinder who will just run her race all the way to the wire. She's making the third start of her form cycle and retaining her 5-pound weight-break. I expect her to track the pace and grind away to the wire, looking to notch career victory number seven. GRADE: B.

#3 SILK FROM HEAVEN (12/1) is a closing sprinter who will need some help pace-wise. Last time, she was 18/1 at this level and ran fourth, putting in a mild late bid. That was her first start since October, so she should move forward today, but her running style will compromise her chances in here; plus she's unlikely to outkick the rail horse. GRADE: X.

#4 TIME FOR EBBY (7/2) should get a good stalking trip, just like she did last time when finishing second at this level at 9/2, checking in a half-length in front of Time for Suzzie. She'll get the jump again on that foe, making her a very logical contender in here, running for the \$20K tag since she's already had success at this level (and against better). GRADE: B.

#5 LIPPY (4/1) is a lightly raced 4-year-old who still has room to improve and plenty of back class to build on. She's making the third start of her form cycle, and she has the tactical speed to sit a very good trip. O'Neill has been a little chilly this meet, but this gal seems to be well-spotted after several races against tougher, so we'll see how she responds in here. GRADE: A.

#6 STORMIN RANGER (6/1) broke her maiden two back going 5.5-furlongs on a good/sealed Los Al main track. She was part of a slow pace and prevailed in game fashion. However, in her first try versus



winner, she was off slowly and never a factor. She's a 4-year-old who has had only three previous starts, so there is room to grow, but she'll need to prove things today. GRADE: X.

#7 MISS MEGAN (8/5) will be in the catbird seat, sitting just off Lippy, waiting to pounce, just like she did three back when she broke her maiden in fine fashion at Del Mar. Her two races against winners weren't anything special, but they came up north on the synth against open-allowance foes. She's back where she belongs. GRADE: A.

LEG 2 (R6):

Today's second leg moves to the lawn for a competitive \$35K/N3L conditioned-claimer contested at 9-furlongs with the rails at 30-feet. There should be some value in here, since Hootie is shockingly the 9/5 morning-line favorite.

#1 HOOTIE (9/5) is his own worst enemy, always rank and in trouble, which is why it took him so long to get his second win, which came two back in a \$25K/N2L when Rispoli took the reins for the first time. A repeat of that race would certainly put him in the frame, but I don't trust him as far as I can throw him, and I can see him getting into all sorts of problems stuck down at the rail. I would just send him hard and hope for the best, but what do I know? We'll also see if he can stay the 9-furlong distance. Let's take him on here. GRADE: C.

#2 SOBERANO (FR) (20/1) has some decent come-home times, so I wouldn't dismiss him out of hand, especially since he's facing conditioned-claimers for the very first time after being overmatched in most of his U.S. starts. If there is a quick pace, he'll be the beneficiary, but he will need some help up front to flatter his late kick. GRADE: C.

#3 ROARING FORK (6/1) looks on the cheap side, but he has two things going for him: first off, he's making his first start for Peter Miller, who took him for \$16K and is now moving him up in class; secondly, this guy adds blinkers, has speed, and gets a 5-pound weight-break. He'll look to wire the field with the rails out 30-feet. He might not be good enough to hold on, but he'll be in front turning for home, and 6/1 seems like a fair price given that likely scenario. GRADE: A.

#4 HOLY GHOST (5/1) has no early speed but a very strong late kick for this level, so he'll need some help up front to show off that stretch run. He's also coming off a July layoff, so it's quite possible he'll need one off the freshening. He's certainly spotted sensibly, and it's nice to see Cedillo take the call. GRADE: B.

#5 MR. MAGICO (5/1) has yet to run a bad race in the conditioned-claiming ranks, so you can expect his previous race against allowance foes and focus on his restricted races, where he's shown a decent late kick to be competitive. He has a tendency to come up short, but at least you know he will be trying to the wire—and Powell is very strong with this kind of comebacker, as this runner is coming off a 170-day layoff. GRADE: B.

#6 SPECTATOR'S DREAM (50/1) looks like he will be a spectator in this race, chasing the pace and weakening while watching the others carry on without him. He does have early speed, so he could make things tricky for Roaring Fork, but this recent \$20K maiden-claimer—who is racing above condition—seems in tough. GRADE: X.

#7 BLAME IT ON KITTY (15/1) was somewhat competitive in the starter-allowance ranks, but he needed to drop to the \$12.5K/N2L level to get his second win, which came last time in life-and-death fashion when going a mile on the main track. He does have a decent second at today's distance when he ran well against age-restricted \$50K foes, but that was the race that seemed to knock him off form. A repeat of that run makes him competitive, but I wasn't too impressed by his last race. GRADE: X.



#8 EROTIC (5/1) is the best animal in the race, but Carava has been woeful the past year or so with his turf runners, to the tune of 0-for-59 on the lawn. *Eeesh!* That said, Rosario stays put after a better-than-looked fifth in a 5.5-furlong turf sprint against much tougher foes. This guy is a two-turn animal, so he should be primed for a good effort today. Can Carava get off the turf duck? GRADE: A.

#9 LIFELINE (4/1) is the son of a very classy mare, but he hasn't lived up to his mommy's expectations. He's coming off an October freshening after running an okay fourth against time-restricted \$32K claimers. Prat takes the call, which is a positive, but this one likes to take his time getting into stride, so he will have his work cut out for him—and he will need to show more than he has since coming off that long layoff from May 2018 to May 2019. That said, he's the only runner in the field with a win (actually two) at today's distance. GRADE: B.

LEG 3 (R7):

Today's third leg drew a short but interesting field for this \$62.5K optional-claiming/N2X for fillies and mares going 8.5-furlongs on the main track.

#1 STARR OF QUALITY (9/2) is a cool 6-year-old mare who is coming off a November freshening and looking to get a win at this second-level allowance condition after two shots where she just couldn't get to the frontrunning winner. She faces a similar predicament today in this short field, so it would be wise for Pereira to just get her in the race right from the bell. Still, she'll have to do better today while trying to get an extra half-furlong. GRADE: C.

#2 DER LU (7/5) has decent early speed, so you can expect her to be dictating the pace, something she tried to do last time at this level but was nosed out late. That was her first start since October, so she should be able to move forward with that race under her belt. She's not the most talented Baffert runner by any means—and Van Dyke sticks with First Star—but the race kind of sets up for her. GRADE: A.

#3 FIRST STAR (6/5) is a lightly raced 4-year-old who has a lot of potential—but can this late bloomer continue to improve after facing tough stakes foes in her last two starts when going 7-furlongs? I believe the answer is yes because she has shown plenty in all of her races—and she should take a big step forward today getting around two turns and getting some class relief. GRADE: A.

#4 KAYDETRE (5/1) is a cool mare from a one-horse stable, so she's always fun to root for—but she hasn't really taken any step forward, just kind of running her race, which has been good enough for some minor awards in stakes races but where she's never really looked like the winner. She'll get class relief today, but it should be noted that 8.5-furlongs might be just a smidge too far for her. GRADE: C.

#5 CHICKATINI (12/1) has two wins, and they both came against weaker foes at lesser tracks (Fresno and Los Al). She does have speed, so Velez can take it to Der Lu early and then hope the 5-pound weight-break kicks in. Still, this gal was part of a glacial pace last time while racing on turf, and she weakened to finish sixth. She'll be tighter today, but she'll probably get leg weary late. GRADE: C.

LEG 4 (R8):

Today's Pick 4 concludes with a tough Cal-bred Maiden Special Weight for fillies and mares going 8-furlongs with the rails at 30-feet.

#1 TOO HOT FOR CURLIN (6/1), the first D'Amato entrant, has a couple of decent races at this level, but she's starting to look like a gal who might need lesser company to shine. I can forgive her last race from a wide post, but she did have three chances on turf to start her career, and the best she could do was a closing third. At least she'll get to save ground—and if she gets a quick pace, she can contend for a slice, but I prefer others. GRADE: C.



#2 STARSHIP SKY (50/1) has been well-beaten on dirt against cheaper maiden-claimers. She now switches to turf, stretches out, and takes off the blinkers. Not sure that's enough. GRADE: X.

#3 DURGA (20/1) was 48/1 at this level last time, and she ran sixth, stalking inside in a good spot but failing to kick on when the real running started. She can improve off that in her second try going long, but she will need to do a lot better—and it's disconcerting that she's lost at the maiden-claiming level twice before. GRADE: C.

#4 WINDS ALOFT (15/1) is a 5-year-old who is making her first start—not a good thing in terms of stoutness, but you'd have to think she's shown some ability in order for her connections to bother running her at this point in her career. That said, it's tough to debut going long, especially for a trainer who rarely has them fully cranked. Maybe next time. GRADE: X.

#5 OUR ROMANCE (5/1), the second D'Amato runner, looks a lot like her stablemate: a gal who has run some decent races at this level but who hasn't shown enough oomph late to get the job done. Franco ends up on the rail horse, while Velez (and his 5-pound weight-break) show up here. That 5-pounds can mean a lot late in the lane against a field like this, but still, this one will need to show the eye of the tiger today. GRADE: C.

#6 DANCE COSTUME (5/2) is relatively unexposed (as opposed to most of these), since she's making just her second career start. Her debut in a 5.5-furlong sprint was pretty good: she tracked from off the pace (through quick splits) and then ran on willingly late to finish second, looking like a gal who would appreciate two turns. Prat takes the call on a filly who should run a good one today. GRADE: A.

#7 Y NOT SIZZLE (4/1), like several of these, has had her chances to break through, but she hasn't been able to get the job done. She's run well enough to pick up plenty of checks for the Mullins barn, but she hasn't shown the eye of the tiger when it matters most. That said, this is her second start with Rispoli, who rode her really well last time to just miss by a half-length, so maybe today is the day this gal can finally break through. GRADE: C.

#8 OH PRETTY WOMAN (3/1), the second Mullins charge, came off a year layoff last time and ran a very good third, closing resolutely from off the pace to just miss by a half-length. That was her first start for Mullins, so she should be poised and ready to take a step forward today with that race under her belt. GRADE: A.

#9 HOT MAGISTRATE (6/1) has plenty of early speed, so I can see Van Dyke getting her out and over to dictate the pace—and with the rails out 30-feet, that could make her very dangerous against a bunch of off-the-pace types who haven't exactly wowed with their willingness to win. I don't like that she's lost against maiden-claimers or that she always gets run down (even with a 5-pound weight-break), but she does look to have a pace advantage in here (and a jock upgrade), so today could be the day she finally hangs on. GRADE: B.

SUGGESTED WAGERS

The key to this sequence is mainly beating Hootie (9/5) in Leg 2, but there is still a chance this can chalk out, so you should play your strongest combos a few extra times in addition to the **\$94 MATRIX** (if you're so inclined). At least we had a nice little hit on Sunday to reinvest some of our winnings today, but if you want to spend less, **\$54** will get you all "A's" with two "B's," while **\$32** will get you all "A's" with one "B." 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
5	5 7	2 4	1	3 6
6	3 8	4 5 9	1 2	6 7
7	2 3		1 4 5	
8	6 8	9	1 3 5 7	2 4

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 5	Race 6	Race 7	Race 8	\$ per Bet	Cost of Ticket	Emphasize
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All A Entries	1	5,7	3,8	2,3	6,8	\$0.50	\$8.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A's with One B	2	2,4	3,8	2,3	6,8	\$0.50	\$8.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	3	5,7	4,5,9	2,3	6,8	\$0.50	\$12.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	4	5,7	3,8	2,3	9	\$0.50	\$4.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A's with Two ...	5	2,4	4,5,9	2,3	6,8	\$0.50	\$12.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	6	2,4	3,8	2,3	9	\$0.50	\$4.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	7	5,7	4,5,9	2,3	9	\$0.50	\$6.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A's with One C	8	1	3,8	2,3	6,8	\$0.50	\$4.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	9	5,7	1,2	2,3	6,8	\$0.50	\$8.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	10	5,7	3,8	1,4,5	6,8	\$0.50	\$12.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	11	5,7	3,8	2,3	1,3,5,7	\$0.50	\$16.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
Total:							\$94.00	