



## 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**

What a Sunday Late Pick 4: four stacked races in a row with a total of 40 horses entered to greet the starter throughout the sequence—all part of a really good eight-race card with a first post of 12:30 p.m. This is a good opportunity, so let's see if we can make the most of it! Also, just a reminder that we race tomorrow, Monday, 2/17/20, President's Day.

### **LEG 1 (R5):**

We begin today's sequence with a neat entry-level allowance/\$50K optional-claimer for Cal-bred 3-year-olds going 8-furlongs on the turf with the rails at 10-feet. I thought this was a really competitive race.

**#1 SUMMER FIRE (6/1)** is interesting to me because I think he can move up by getting on turf for the first time. I also think he's going to get a really good inside stalking trip with the blinkers coming off and Mike Smith sticking around. He's a bit of a guess in here, but I'm not crazy about the runners who have tried turf, so why not take a shot on a horse who was considered good enough to run in the Cal Cup Derby last time? GRADE: A.

**#2 INCLUDE THE TAX (8/1)** attracts Rosario, but is that enough to endorse a runner who needed Cal-bred \$50K maiden-claimers to graduate? Also note that he couldn't beat starter foes last time when stretching out for the first time. He's raced solely on dirt, but he should handle the turf okay—but other than the presence of Rosario, he seems up against it in here. GRADE: X.

**#3 MARGOT'S BOY (3/1)** is an obvious contender by dint of his last race, a wire victory against ten other MSWs, going a mile and being sent off at 7/2. There is other speed in here, but I don't think this one needs the lead to win. He does have to face winners for the first time, but he showed enough in his last race to suggest he can continue to improve. GRADE: B.

**#4 BALTIMORE BEECHO (15/1)** hasn't been able to beat lesser while sprinting, and I'm not sure a stretch out is going to help him all that much, since the one time he tried 7-panels, he wilted like a flower in the hot desert sun. That said, he will be forwardly placed and should get a good trip, if you're a believer. GRADE: X.

**#5 JOHNNY PODRES (8/1)**, the first Miyadi entrant, pitched himself to victory last time, closing resolutely from off the pace in a mile synth race up north against seven other MSWs. It was a nice effort, and his closing kick will come in handy in a race that should have a decent early clip. It's hard to know where he stacks up on this circuit against winners, but he should at least get the right race shape to flatter his running style. GRADE: C.

**#6 DAPPER (12/1)** has hinted at ability at times, but he's never really put it together since breaking his maiden at first-asking. He's never been on turf, but he should handle it okay—but can he



handle two turns? He's lost lengths in the lane in his last three starts, including two around two turns. It wouldn't shock me if he stepped up and was competitive in here (since **OptixWORKS** gives him a **Turf** designation), but he will need to show more. GRADE: C.

#7 DESERT DUDE (15/1) has speed, and I'm sure he'll use it, since his one win came on the engine up north in a 5.5-furlong synth race. His two starts versus winners were no good—but they came against open allowance foes. He doesn't look like much on paper, but the fact that Cedillo bothers to ride means I won't dismiss him out of hand. GRADE: C.

#8 IF ID TOLD YOU (4/1) was sharp in victory last time when beating nine other MSWs in a one-mile turf race at Del Mar in November. He was the tepid 5/2 favorite but won like a 6/5 shot. He's been freshened since and has to face winners today, but his two turf races are both good, and he fits nicely against this bunch. The only concern is the trip he's going to get with this jock: 4-wide stalking? If so, that's going to be a problem. GRADE: B.

#9 FLY THE SKY (5/2), the second Miyadi runner, has tactical speed, something he used to great effect last time when stalking the pace and drawing off to win easily against starter-allowance foes. This is a tougher level, but he doesn't really catch the toughest group either. As good as that last race was, however, I can see him regressing a little today, since he was part of a very fast early pace and never really slowed down. There will be a quick pace again today, and this guy has to break from the far outside post. GRADE: B.

### **LEG 2 (R6):**

Today's second leg is another Cal-bred race, this one being a \$20K optional-claiming/N1X for state-breds going 6-furlongs on the main track. It drew a big field of 12 horses.

#1 RICKEY B (20/1) was a win-machine to start his career, but things didn't really pan out and he's now racing for a \$20K tag after being claimed a few times for \$50K. He was 55/1 at this level last time, and he ran a blah sixth after a slow beginning. He can do better today, but he looks like he's going to need lesser company at some point. GRADE: X.

#2 **AFTERNOON HEAT (4/1)** just ran second at this level at 7/1, grinding away to secure the place position at 6.5-furlongs. He'll have more work to do on the cutback, since he'll be a little farther back, but Rosario is so good with his well-timed rides that this guy should have every chance to get his nose down on the line. GRADE: A.

#3 I BELONG TO BECKY (7/2) has sharp early speed, but there are others who will be forwardly placed, so this guy will have to earn it today—unlike last time when he got an easy lead against much weaker \$16K/N3L conditioned-claimers and never looked back on his way to a facile victory. It's tough to take on any Miller trainee, but 7/2 seems like an underlay to me. GRADE: B.

#4 JEN GO UNCHAINED (20/1) needed \$12.5K/N2L foes to notch his second win—and it was a total grind-fest, despite the fact that he was 15/10 and should have won fairly easily against a weak field. He was claimed out of that race by old-school master Becerra, who can certainly move them up, but this one seems better suited to the lower claiming ranks. GRADE: X.

#5 **TIGRE DI SLUGO (3/1)** has some ability, which is why he was sent off at 9/5 in his first try versus winners last time—but a slow beginning compromised his chances and he finished a well-beaten third. He can do much better today with a clean getaway. GRADE: A.

#6 POLICY (6/1) was a top pick for us last time at 5/1, and he did the business, closing resolutely from off the pace to get up and win a starter allowance going 6.5-furlongs. This is a tougher field, but a repeat of that performance would definitely put him in the frame. However, he will be at the mercy of pace and trip, so things will have to go his way. GRADE: B.



#7 BLACK STORM (15/1) just beat \$16K/N3L foes fairly easily, running his usual race—but this is a tougher spot, and three back, he lost pretty handily to I Belong to Becky, so he'll need to do better today. I suspect he's going to need lesser foes to shine, but it's hard to say anything negative about a horse who has hit the board in more than half of his 21 career starts. GRADE: X.

#8 BIG BARREL (20/1) cuts back from a mile after setting the pace and weakening in a \$16K/N3L, where he was 2/1. He should be fit off that race, but it's not a good thing that he regressed so much when making his first start last time for a new barn. Maybe he can run on late for a small slice under a 5-pound weight-break, but he's another who seems better suited to lesser company. GRADE: X.

#9 SCOUTED (20/1) has been beaten a few times at this level, making him tough to support on paper—but he plots well on the Surface/Distance **OptixPLOT**, so I won't dismiss him out of hand. I'm also not crazy about the June layoff. GRADE: C.

#10 MINOSO (12/1) has had a million tries at this level and hasn't been able to get the job done, though he has run well enough to pick up some minor awards. He likes to do his running from off the pace, so if he gets a quick early clip to close into, he could easily round out the exotics—but he's going to need to finally take a step up if he's going to win. GRADE: C.

#11 RICK'S DREAM (20/1) likes to be in the vanguard early, and that's going to be an issue from all the way out here and with some speed to his inside. He also has some class issues, since he was 44/1 at this level last time, and he ran a speed-and-fade fifth. That said, he'll appreciate the cutback, and he has won at this level, if you think he can reverse form today. GRADE: X.

#12 POSTERIZE (6/1) was 10/1 at this level last time, and he attended the pace before weakening to finish fourth (with a 5-pound weight-break) while going 6.5-furlongs. He'll appreciate the cutback, and he should be more fit while making the second start of his form cycle. That said, he's needed the lead to win both of his races, and he's probably not going to get it today with I Belong to Becky inside of him. Unless you think his new trainer, Lorenzo Ruiz (who took him for \$20K last time), can move him up, he seems better suited for the exotics. GRADE: C.

### **LEG 3 (R7):**

Today's third leg is the \$100K Sweet Life (G3), a 5.5-furlong turf sprint for 3-year-old fillies. The rails are at 10-feet, so it should be a fairly run race.

#1 FLORENTINE DIAMOND (20/1) showed speed last time when trying turf for the first time, but she was run down in the lane. The rail draw kind of forces her hand, and the fact that she couldn't beat Cal-bred N1X foes last time means this is a tough spot for this gal. GRADE: X.

#2 BLUE SKY BABY (5/1) broke her maiden over this course and distance, and then found two turns a bridge too far for her in her last two starts. She has tactical speed and should be fit on the cutback. GRADE: A.

#3 ORQUIDIAS BIZ (6/1) was sharp when breaking her maiden three back going 5-furlongs over this course. Her two starts since then were decent showings against some pretty tough dirt animals. She's back on the green today, and you can expect her to be trying all the way to the wire. GRADE: B.

#4 SHINES HER LIGHT (IRE) (4/1) made her first U.S. start a winning one, closing nicely from off the pace to break her maiden at 13/1. She's coming back pretty quickly from that February 1 win, however, which makes me think that this wasn't really the plan, and that the connections are taking a shot because this race came up and she won her stateside debut. There's also the dreaded Euro bounce to consider. GRADE: C.

#5 LIGHTHOUSE (5/1) broke her maiden two back going 5-furlongs on the turf at Del Mar in wire fashion. She looked good that day, but she wasn't able to carry that momentum in her next start when



going two turns against winners. She stalked the pace and weakened. I can forgive that race, since she's now cutting back. She'll get a good forwardly placed trip, and I don't think we've seen the best of this \$375K purchase. GRADE: B.

**#6 LAURA'S LIGHT (6/5)** will be super-fit cutting back from two sharp one-mile races, where she showed good route speed and stayed on well. Before that, she showed she could stalk and pounce while sprinting, which means Cedillo can have her in a good spot before unleashing her stretch run. She's no value at 6/5, but she appears to be the most talented lady in the bunch—and she still has plenty of upside. GRADE: A.

**#7 ROADRUNNER'S HONOR (12/1)** tries turf for the first time after three mediocre dirt races against winners. The breeding doesn't scream "turf" to me, so I'm fine watching one against this decent group. GRADE: X.

**#8 SPITEFULNESS (15/1)** tries turf for the first time after experimenting on dirt and synth, and while running both short and long. In other words, I don't think the connections know what this gal wants to do. She does have tactical speed, and her best races have come sprinting on synth, so if she can improve on that form, maybe she can spice up your exotics, but she's tough to support on the win end. GRADE: X.

#### **LEG 4 (R8):**

Today's challenging Late Pick 4 ends with a full field of \$20K maiden-claimers going 8.5-furlongs on the main track.

**#1 SHARPSHOOTINGGEORGE**—program scratch.

**#2 STARSHIP CHEWY (20/1)** is 0-for-21, so this one-paced plodder is tough to support on the win end. That said, there should be a decent early clip, so this guy could easily clunk up for underneath in your exotics. GRADE: X.

**#3 MEADWAY (20/1)** makes the second start of his form cycle after prepping in a 7-furlong event where he finished an even fifth. He's also a one-paced animal who lacks early speed, so he'll need a lot of help up front. On the plus side, this is the lowest level he's ever raced at, so he could sneak in your exotics at a number. GRADE: X.

**#4 MY JOURNEY (6/1)** has good early speed but lacks stamina, so unless you think he can just run them off their feet and not stop, then I suppose he could win—but there is other speed in here, and this guy has had three tries at this level to show us what he's made of. That said, he does make the second start of his form cycle, so he should move forward today after a blah run at 6.5-furlongs. GRADE: C.

**#5 MOANA LUNA (6/1)** was a top pick for me last time, but he chased the pace while wide and weakened badly. I liked him that day because I thought he would make the lead, and he didn't. In his defense, he was coming off a layoff, so he probably needed that start, and a wide journey certainly didn't help. I like that the hustling Maldonado hops back on board. He will need to try and slow things down up front and show more starch in the lane, but he offers some value here at 6/1. GRADE: A.

**#6 PEEDIE (8/1)** was a tepid 3/1 favorite at this level last time, but he never really got untracked in that 6-furlong affair. He now makes the second start of his form cycle while stretching back out, which is where he does his best work (albeit that best work has come on turf). I think he can do much better today. GRADE: B.

**#7 SPEAKEROF THEHOUSE (3/1)** is getting close to "now or never" time, since this will be his second start at this low level—and this off-the-pace runner should get a pace to close into while also



getting some extra ground to work with underneath a 5-pound weight-break. This is his race to lose, but has that pack-animal trait been ingrained into this 0-for-14 maiden? We shall see. GRADE: A.

#8 AN AMERICAN JET (8/1) is a closing sprinter who stretches out under a 10-pound weight-break today. We'll see if he can show the same stretch run around two turns, but I do think it's odd that this son of Ghostzapper has mostly been sprinting to this point (with his one two-turn try a non-effort on turf against Cal-bred MSWs). He's not impossible, but there are questions to answer. GRADE: C.

#9 CROSS TOWN (7/2) has tactical speed and should get a good stalking trip in here—but, man, has he had his chances at this low level, to no avail. He'll also have to carry his speed an extra half-furlong, which might also be an issue. He certainly fits amongst these, but what you see is what you get. GRADE: C.

#10 ROUGH RIDE—program scratch.

#11 THE EASY WAY—program scratch.

#12 NIL PHET (15/1) hasn't done much in any of his starts, though I will say that his last race was certainly an improvement, finishing fourth at this level with a wide trip. Unfortunately, he's probably in for an even wider trip today, so maybe look for him next time with a better post, since maybe that last race was a sign that he's on the improve. GRADE: X.

#13 STRONG RULER (50/1) gets a rare Jon White 50/1 morning-line number hung on him, and for good reason: this guy hasn't shown anything in any of his three starts. Now he'll try stretching out to see if that helps his cause. I don't think that will matter, as this guy seems destined for night racing at Los Al. GRADE: X.

#14 ZIYANAIR (5/1) has a good 7-furlong race two back to run back to, but he's burdened with a very difficult post. I'm not sure what Assael Espinoza is going to do from out here, but I do know that if this guy were drawn inside, I'd like him a little bit, since he's going turf-to-dirt and dropping back to the \$20K level. That said, maybe look for him next time cutting back to 6.5-furlongs or 7-furlongs. GRADE: X.

### **SUGGESTED WAGERS**

This is a really tough sequence, and as such, we'll have to spend a little money to get some good coverage so we can give ourselves a fighting chance. The whole **MATRIX** costs **\$90**, but if you want to spend less, **\$64** will get you all "A's" with two "B's," while **\$26** 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!**]**

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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	1	3 8 9	5 6 7	2 4
6	2 5	3 6	9 10 12	1 4 7 8 11
7	2 6	3 5	4	1 7 8
8	5 7	6	4 8 9	2 3 12 13 14

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	1	2,5	2,6	5,7	\$0.50	\$4.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2	<input type="checkbox"/> x3	<input type="checkbox"/> x4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A's with One B	2	3,8,9	2,5	2,6	5,7	\$0.50	\$12.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2	<input type="checkbox"/> x3	<input type="checkbox"/> x4
	3	1	3,6	2,6	5,7	\$0.50	\$4.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2	<input type="checkbox"/> x3	<input type="checkbox"/> x4
	4	1	2,5	3,5	5,7	\$0.50	\$4.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2	<input type="checkbox"/> x3	<input type="checkbox"/> x4
	5	1	2,5	2,6	6	\$0.50	\$2.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2	<input type="checkbox"/> x3	<input type="checkbox"/> x4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A's with Two ...	6	3,8,9	3,6	2,6	5,7	\$0.50	\$12.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2	<input type="checkbox"/> x3	<input type="checkbox"/> x4
	7	3,8,9	2,5	3,5	5,7	\$0.50	\$12.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2	<input type="checkbox"/> x3	<input type="checkbox"/> x4
	8	3,8,9	2,5	2,6	6	\$0.50	\$6.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2	<input type="checkbox"/> x3	<input type="checkbox"/> x4
	9	1	3,6	3,5	5,7	\$0.50	\$4.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2	<input type="checkbox"/> x3	<input type="checkbox"/> x4
	10	1	3,6	2,6	6	\$0.50	\$2.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2	<input type="checkbox"/> x3	<input type="checkbox"/> x4
	11	1	2,5	3,5	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	5,6,7	2,5	2,6	5,7	\$0.50	\$12.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2	<input type="checkbox"/> x3	<input type="checkbox"/> x4
	13	1	9,10,12	2,6	5,7	\$0.50	\$6.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2	<input type="checkbox"/> x3	<input type="checkbox"/> x4
	14	1	2,5	4	5,7	\$0.50	\$2.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2	<input type="checkbox"/> x3	<input type="checkbox"/> x4
	15	1	2,5	2,6	4,8,9	\$0.50	\$6.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2	<input type="checkbox"/> x3	<input type="checkbox"/> x4
<b>Total:</b>							<b>\$90.00</b>			