



THE PICK 4 MATRIX

By Frank R. Scatoni

(follow on Twitter [@ScatoniSureShot](#) and also visit [@OptixEQ](#))

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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

We hit last Saturday's Late Pick 4 with an A-B-A-B MATRIX combo (that paid \$160.10), so let's see if lightning can strike twice by hitting this Saturday's sequence as well!

LEG 1 (R6):

We begin today's Late Pick 4 with a difficult Cal-bred Maiden Special Weight contested at 6-furlongs on the main track. It wouldn't shock me if any one of these horses (except maybe one) won this.

#1 I AM INNOCENT (10/1), the first Cecil entrant, drew the short straw and has to break from the rail as a first-time starter. The fact that Reddam's main-man Gutierrez ends up on the stablemate makes me think this guy is going to need one. GRADE: X.

#2 CAERULEAN (4/1), the second Cecil runner, has done a little better in the mornings than his stablemate, hence Gutierrez's presence on this son of Square Eddie. Cecil doesn't often have them fully cranked, but he is capable of getting one ready when he wants to—but maybe this one's future will be on turf. GRADE: C.

#3 TALLEMARK (7/2) was 3/1 in his debut against fellow 3-year-olds, and he ran an even fourth, looking like a horse who would benefit from that experience. He'll have to beat a few older runners, but any sort of improvement should put him in the frame. GRADE: B.

#4 LUCK IS GOLDEN (5/1) is a 3-year-old first-time starter for Puype, who does excellent work with his debut runners. This guy will have to show he can beat a few older horses, but there are some snazzy works on display, so I wouldn't be surprised if this one showed up with a very good effort. GRADE: A.

#5 HOOP DREAM (5/2), one of two 4-year-olds in here, was 16/1 in his debut, where he ran evenly around the track while between horses. He gets a better post today, so he can stalk the pace, and any normal second-out improvement would make him a serious contender. GRADE: B.

#6 FELLOW CITIZEN (2/1) couldn't beat Cal-bred \$50K maiden-claimers back in July 2018 when he made his debut—but he ran a winning race and was sidelined after that. His recent comebacker at this level saw him predictably show speed and weaken while going 5.5-furlongs on turf. I like that Miller is now protecting him twice in a row, and as a 4-year-old, he has an advantage over most of these. GRADE: A.

LEG 2 (R7):

Today's second leg is a decent renewal of the Pasadena Stakes, a one-mile turf affair for 3-year-olds only, competing with the rails at zero-feet.



#1 GOVERNANCE (10/1), the first Baltas runner, has tactical speed, and he'll have to use it from the rail in order to get good forward position. I do like that he's run faster in each of his starts since starting his career, but he did just break his maiden on January 1, and he now has to face some quality animals in his first start versus winners. GRADE: X.

#2 LAST OPPORTUNITY (IRE) (4/1) was off slowly in his U.S. debut in the Cecil B. DeMille (G3) back in December, but he kept to task and finished strongly to run third. I like that Drysdale has freshened him up after that to help prevent the dreaded Euro bounce. GRADE: A.

#3 RAGER (12/1) ran a good second in the Baffle when going 5.5-furlongs on the turf and losing to a quality router named Billy Batts. This guy will now stretch out himself while facing some decent two-turn animals. Lerner has done a fine job, but I expect this runner to be part of a decent early clip while stretching out. GRADE: X.

#4 CLUB ASPEN (12/1) has tactical dirt speed, so I'm sure Velez will put him in the race early and hope for the best—but that's also what he did in the Zuma Beach, and this guy was no match for stakes runners on the turf. Maybe this is being used as a turf-to-dirt prep for next time? GRADE: X.

#5 LIAR LIAR (IRE) (6/1), the second Baltas entrant, has an okay late kick, but he's been outfinished by several of these before, so he'll need to do better today. That said, he should be fresh off a December layoff, so it wouldn't shock me if he was in the hunt late. GRADE: B.

#6 SMOOTH LIKE STRAIT (3/1) was improbably 13/10 last time in the Eddie Logan, despite the fact that this frontrunner was going to face some heat. He dueled early and faded to fourth. He's going to face some heat yet again today, so if he's ever going to train on at the next level, he's going to have to learn how to pass horses. GRADE: C.

#7 RA'AD (12/1) tries turf and two turns for the first time, and usually when Baffert does this move, it's out of desperation. Expect Espinoza to gun hard out of the gate and look to steal it—but there should be enough other speed in here to compromise this guy's chances. GRADE: X.

#8 GOLIAD (5/1) was disappointing last time in the Eddie Logan, but his hand was forced while breaking from the rail: he was part of a quick early pace and wilted badly on "good" turf. He is now drawn outside, so he can stalk—and he should be back on firm footing. GRADE: B.

#9 HARIBOUX (GB) (7/2) has a very nice stretch run, so if the anticipated quick early pace materializes, he'll have every chance to mow them all down late under the best turf rider in the colony—so that means you can draw a line through his poor race in the Cecil B. DeMille (G3), since he was never really comfortable and couldn't settle into a good rhythm. GRADE: A.

LEG 3 (R8):

We move back to the main track for today's eighth race, an 8.5-furlong dirt affair for fillies and mares.

#1 MISS STORMY D (2/1) stretched out for the first time last time and ran a creditable second at 8.5-furlongs, stalking the pace and creeping toward the wire winner. She'll be fit off that, and the slight cutback should help her cause. GRADE: A.

#2 SUPER KLAUS (10/1) hasn't been able to beat conditioned-claimers, so she'll have to show she can handle allowance runners. I do like that she's a tryer, so you can expect her to be grinding away to the wire—but she will really need to step things up today. GRADE: X.

#3 NOBLE CONTESSA (2/1) made the lead last time against \$40K claimers and never looked back, romping home to a 5-plus length victory. She'll have to repeat that effort to beat the rail horse and the outside horse, but if she continues to move forward, she'll have every chance while on the engine today. GRADE: B.



#4 PAIGE RUNNER (8/1) needed Los Al foes to finally break her maiden in her tenth try back in December. It came over a wet-fast/sealed track, so not only will she have to move forward on fast dirt, but she'll also have to do it off a layoff and against winners. GRADE: X.

#5 MONGOLIAN EMPIRE (12/1) is a one-paced grinder who has been well-beaten at this level before—and she was just pasted by Noble Contessa at the \$40K claiming level. She'll need to do a lot better. GRADE: X.

#6 MONGOLIAN HUMOR (9/5) has a win at this level, so she's in for the \$40K tag today after Miller just claimed her for \$20K—so you have to like the confidence. You also have to like the fact that she's versatile and should get a good forwardly placed trip on the stretch-out. GRADE: A.

LEG 4 (R9):

The sequence closes with a really nice \$62.5K optional-claiming/N2X contested at 9-furlongs on the turf with the rails at zero-feet. There should be a really fast pace in here, and it looks like Mullins has the two best closers in the race.

#1 FORAY (6/1) drew the rail, has an abundance of speed, and gets a 5-pound weight-break, so I think it's pretty evident what this guy is going to do—attend a quick pace and probably get overtaken late, just like he's done before at this level and distance. GRADE: X.

#2 NEVER EASY (15/1) also has a lot of speed, so he seems up against it in here, especially since he showed last time that this level might be a little too tough for him. GRADE: X.

#3 MOODY JIM (IRE) (7/2), one of two Mullins runners, is a very talented animal who has quality stakes experience and who should appreciate this N2X level while coming off a November layoff. He's got a devastating turn of foot, and there should be plenty of pace to flatter his already strong late run. GRADE: A.

#4 CHOSEN VESSEL (4/1) has speed, but at least he's shown that he can rate a little bit—something that should come in handy as a quick pace develops just in front of him. He's also dropping in from the graded-stakes ranks, so he'll welcome this spot. GRADE: C.

#5 NORTH COUNTY GUY (8/1) was gifted his N1X win two back when he was all alone through glacial splits in an 11-furlong race at Del Mar. I was shocked he won that day because in every race prior to that one, he looked like he wanted no part of racing beyond a mile. He'll get a good tracking trip in here, but I still question his ability beyond 8-furlongs. GRADE: X.

#6 ORIGINAIRE (IRE) (3/1), the second Mullins charge, also has a very strong late kick, but he's been consistently in training, unlike his stablemate who will look to fire big off a layoff. I've backed this guy many times before, including in the Mathis Brothers Mile (G2), where he ran a game second at 13/1—so why would I get off him today? GRADE: A.

#7 WOUND TIGHT (4/1) is a really nice Cal-bred who likes to be forwardly placed, so there is a world in which he gets too caught up in a swift early pace—something that didn't happen last time when he was allowed to walk the dog in a Cal-bred stakes race at this distance. That said, Cedillo is a smart jock, and I'm sure he'll rate this guy in here—and that means his solid recent form makes him a contender. GRADE: C.

#8 OISEAU DE GUERRE (20/1) has always been at his best as a closing sprinter—and his best work has come up north, so this seems like a really tough spot for him. GRADE: X.

#9 GREGORIAN CHANT (IRE) (15/1) showed some decent stretch runs last year as a 3-year-old, so I'm willing to draw a line through his last race when he ran sixth at this level after uncharacteristically attending the pace before weakening. Maybe he was too keen off a long layoff, or maybe that was just a prep for this—either way, I expect better today. GRADE: B.



SUGGESTED WAGERS

I feel like I've got a pretty good handle on these races, so I'm okay investing **\$74** to cover the whole **MATRIX**. If you want to spend less, **\$58** 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
6	4 6	3 5	2	1
7	2 9	5 8	6	1 3 4 7
8	1 6	3		2 4 5
9	3 6	9	4 7	1 2 5 8

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 6	Race 7	Race 8	Race 9	\$ per Bet	Cost of Ticket	Emphasize
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All A Entries	1	4,6	2,9	1,6	3,6	\$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	3,5	2,9	1,6	3,6	\$0.50	\$8.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	3	4,6	5,8	1,6	3,6	\$0.50	\$8.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	4	4,6	2,9	3	3,6	\$0.50	\$4.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	5	4,6	2,9	1,6	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 B's	6	3,5	5,8	1,6	3,6	\$0.50	\$8.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	7	3,5	2,9	3	3,6	\$0.50	\$4.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	8	3,5	2,9	1,6	9	\$0.50	\$4.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	9	4,6	5,8	3	3,6	\$0.50	\$4.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	10	4,6	5,8	1,6	9	\$0.50	\$4.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	11	4,6	2,9	3	9	\$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	2	2,9	1,6	3,6	\$0.50	\$4.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	13	4,6	6	1,6	3,6	\$0.50	\$4.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
	14	4,6	2,9	1,6	4,7	\$0.50	\$8.00	<input type="checkbox"/> x2 <input type="checkbox"/> x3 <input type="checkbox"/> x4
Total:							\$74.00	