



THE GREEN SHEET

Full-Card Analysis and Selections

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Ellis Park: Summer Meet 2017

Twentieth Day: Friday, August 11, 2017

Post Time: 1:50 P.M. Eastern

Ellis Park Meet Stats: 159-42-31-38—26%W, 70%ITM

Note: Selections are made in order, first through fourth

RACE ONE

Five-time winner **RENN LAKE** faced an honest (for this class level) horse in Como Se Llama in his last start versus conditioned nickel claimers at Belterra, and he figured to need that effort coming off a near three-month layoff. Indiana-bred has never ben off the board at “The Pea Patch”, has a license to move forward in his second start off the shelf, and attracts the services of Brian Hernandez, Jr.; gets the nod. The six-year-old gelding **RAZORBACK RED** is winless in his past 18 starts, but he catches a soft group of \$4,000 “non-winners of a race in a year” foes in this spot for trainer Ron Moquett. Chestnut was a solid second at 24-1 facing an arguably tougher field in his last Ellis Park appearance on July 23, where he overcame a wide post draw and trip to be beaten two lengths for all the money. He has a touch of tactical speed and has finished first-or-second in three-of-five starts lifetime over the local strip; contender. **XANTO** has never been in this cheap, but this son of Gio Ponti is still eligible for the “non-winners of three races lifetime” condition and was a non-factor in his only prior start on the dirt, albeit against maiden allowance types at Santa Anita. He’s bred to be a two-turn turf horse, both his prior wins have been in front running fashion sprinting on the weeds, and he turns back in distance while returning to the dirt for the first time in 11 races. He hasn’t shown any early lick in his past three starts wearing blinkers; figures for part, taking a stand against for top honors. The nine-year-old **KOWBOY KODY** has finished in front of two horses in as many starts since returning from a near two-month layoff back in early July, and his best recent form has been over a synthetic surface at Turfway. He does like the local surroundings, however, as he as finished in the money in 50 percent of his

lifetime starts in Henderson; useful when spreading in the exotics.

SELECTIONS: 5-2-1-7

RACE TWO

I'll take a shot with the first-time starter **LONELY PETUNIA** for trainer Jinks Fires, whose barn is hitting at a 21 percent clip at the meet to date and is riding the crest of Colonel's dark temper's win in the recently run West Virginia Derby (G3). Daughter of Archarcharch (also trained by Fires) hasn't been turning any heads in the A.M. but is spotted to win right out of the box in for a \$16K tag, and she catches a light field. Jockey Jon Court has been riding very well at the tilt; can pop on debut. **LA FEMME ROYALE** takes a stout class drop from maiden allowance company into this spot for a \$16K tag, gets wheeled back off three weeks rest, and will wear blinkers for the first time for the Casse barn. Gray miss just galloped around the track on debut, but she has plenty of upside making just her second career start and will certainly be tighter this time around; contends on the drop. **MISTLETOE** failed to beat a horse on debut in the mud at Belmont for the Mott stable, but she's another filly taking a stout class drop in this affair. Bay daughter of Paynter is an unproven commodity over a "fast" strip and while the sudden, rash class drop seems a bit suspect (as it does with **LA FEMME ROYALE**) she figures to move forward second time out of the box and the class relief certainly suits; threat. **NO PARTNERS** didn't pick her feet up when taking a significant class drop in her last start, where she took action at the windows and could do no better than sixth, beaten 10 lengths and change by her stablemate Lullingstone. She gets wheeled back off 12 days rest, continues her class descent, and will wear blinkers for the first time for the Hancock barn; more interested as the price increases.

SELECTIONS: 4-7-6-3

RACE THREE

The third on today's card looks like a good spot to try and beat the favorite—**MAJOR MUNNINGS**—and I'll try to do so with the longshot **GO BEEJA**, the only entrant in this turf sprint with a prior win on grass. Bay son of Tapizar will make his first start off the claim for a new outfit while taking a big step up in class, but that will guarantee a good price. He comes into this race off a near two-month layoff, is capable of running a winning race fresh, and won his only turf start by a dogged half-length despite stumbling at the start. His tactical speed will help him overcome the wide post draw, and he's a consistent horse that has finished first-or-second in five-of-seven lifetime starts; dirt-to-turf angle very appealing—price play special. **CRAWFORD** has faced solid company in all four of his starts against winners, and he's eligible for improvement in this spot making the

third start of his current form cycle for the Asmussen barn. Bay gelding tends to lack a winning kick the last eighth of a mile, but he was six-wide at the quarter-pole in his last outing and was only beaten two lengths and change for all the money; contender. **MAJOR MUNNINGS** was bet down on debut for trainer Jinks Fires and delivered in an off-the-turf affair in Henderson 19 days ago, where he made short work of a field of seven in gate-to-wire fashion, covering five and a half furlongs on the dirt in a quick 1:03 2/5. Three-year-old Munnings gelding is bred to handle the surface change to turf, has speed, the rail, and Jon Court, but he'll get pounded at the windows, will likely regress a bit off a big effort with relatively short rest, and will try winners and the grass for the first time. Obvious player, but I'm playing against to win. **DARK ARDEN** is very sharp right now for trainer Tim Glyshaw, as the dark bay or brown gelding is riding a two-race winning streak and has finished in the money in four-of-six starts in 2017. I'll draw a line through his only previous start on grass, where he dwelt at the start and spotted the field 20 lengths in his career debut, and I like how he has retained honest form while stepping up in class; threat in a good betting contest.

SELECTIONS: 7-3-1-6

RACE FOUR

STELLA NOVA is well-spotted by trainer Benjie Larue in her first start since being haltered for \$7,500 out of her last race, as she's a three-time winner that fits this condition because she's a three-year-old. Free wheeling daughter of Astrology gets a favorable inside post draw and the services of jockey Jon Court, and she's the controlling speed of the race with the key late scratch of My Mystery. This strip has been and typically is kind to front-runners; choice, gate-to-wire. The bay filly **CANDRASA** was well beaten in her first start off the claim for trainer J.R. Caldwell, but she comes into this race fresh and on the drop. Daughter of Candy Ride (Arg) was in tight quarters in her last start leaving the chute at Churchill in a four-horse field, but she won for fun two starts back hooking \$16K down to \$14K types in Louisville. She figures to get a good trip under jockey Brian Hernandez, Jr. stalking front-running **STELLA NOVA**; contender. **LIBERTY FIRE** is a tick cheap for this field, but she has been in good form this year having finished in the money in seven of her past 10 starts. Sophomore miss is the only entrant with four wins to her credit; threat at a square price. The five-year-old **STARSHIP AQUARIUS** has been stuck in this "three lifetime" condition for some time and is an uninspiring two-for-34 lifetime, but she loves the local environs, as she has never been off the board from six lifetime starts at "The Pea Patch" and rallied to be third of eight in her last race in Henderson nearly a month ago at almost 24-1; can bolster exotic payoffs based on her affinity for the local surroundings.

SELECTIONS: 1-4-8-5

RACE FIVE

The gray gelding **SERIOUS INK** is rounding into form for trainer Mike Crowder, and he demonstrated marked improvement in his first turf and two-turn start in his last race in Henderson back on July 22. Gray son of Monarchos broke on the bridle in his last outing, was shuffled back on the backside, and finished with good interest while getting carried out wide in the final sixteenth of a mile at nearly 38-1. He'll get a ground-saving trip on the hedge in this spot under Corey Lanerie and is eligible for improvement in the third start of his current form cycle; choice. **WHERE'S LEW** woke up when dropping down to this class level in his most recent start and his chances are enhanced with the late scratch of the front-running Red Again, but he set a slow pace in his last start and caved in the stretch drive and **WATHMAN** is quicker from the get-go on paper. He loses the "bug boy" and picks up seven pounds off his last start; figures for part, taking a stand against for the win. **WATHMAN** finished a half-length behind the top choice in his last start and was getting out late, but he'll be fitter making his second start off a layoff and is the controlling speed in a relatively paceless race on paper—always a good angle. On the down side, this \$650,000 son of Kitten's Joy has retained suspect form despite dropping down in class, but the race shape from a pace perspective works in his favor; hangs around for part with a top effort. **BRAD'S WAGER** loves to run second—having done so in five of his past seven starts—and while he creeps down in claiming price, the Indiana-bred will step outside of restricted company in this heat. He has hints of green in his pedigree (by Pure Prize out of a Valid Wager mare) but is unproven on the weeds; tab for a minor award.

SELECTIONS: 1-6-8-2

RACE SIX

JOHN TIPPMAN broke slow and rallied into a quick pace on debut for trainer Kenny McPeck at Ellis back in mid-July, where he broke from the one-hole the first time out of the box, was five-wide at the quarter-pole and finished second behind daylight winner Big Iron in a six-furlong affair that went in a snappy 1:10 2/5. Chestnut son of Tiz Wonderful will likely move forward in his second career start and gets an extra sixteenth of a mile to work with this afternoon. First-time Lasix noted; rates top billing. **MUCH TROUBLE** is a \$145,000 son of Into Mischief—a sire that gets runners—and is a half-brother to the graded stakes winner Crewman. Trainer Tom Amoss has made the most out of limited starters at the tilt, and his high-percentage outfit is equally adept with first-time starters and juvenile stock. The wide post draw isn't as much of a concern coming out of the partial chute and jockey Corey Lanerie gets the call; contends right out of the box. **DREAM BABY DREAM** is another first-time starter by Into

Mischief (by Harlan's Holiday), and this bay colt fetched \$210,000 as a two-year-old in training in Ocala back in March. Trainer Steve Asmussen's long time success with two-year-old first-time starters is well documented, though his outfit has been fairly quiet on that front at this meet. This fellow fired a "bullet" over the local strip back in April then wasn't seen on the work tab until nearly two-months later, but he has been training forwardly of late; foolish to slight his chances. **RUBUS** is another entrant that commanded six-figures (\$260K) as a two-year-old in training at the Ocala Breeders Sales Company's offering back in March, but he has a two-turn oriented pedigree, as he's by Majestic Warrior out of a Songandaprayer mare. The Bauer barn is capable with its juvenile stock, and this guy is 8-1 on the morning line; demands your attention in the paddock and post parade—watch the tote board.

SELECTIONS: 4-11-7-3

RACE SEVEN

The bay colt **UNMOORED** has never put forth a poor effort in the past sprinting on turf, and the son of Midshipman was a dirty nose off the win in his last start on the weeds—his first off a near nine-month layoff—and he was fourth behind the eventual turf graded stakes winner Sonic Boom in his grass debut over an unconventional course at Kentucky Downs last September. Sophomore colt figured to get a lot out of his last race and will likely improve in this spot, and he should get a great trip stalking a lively pace under jockey Calvin Borel; choice. **DIG CHARLIE DIG** will love turning back in distance in this spot for trainer Greg Foley, whose outfit is winning at a 23 percent clip at the tilt, as this son of Discreetly Mine has never been off the board sprinting on grass. This guy is capable of running a winning race off the sidelines, he returns to the races off a two-month plus hiatus, and he responds to jockey Corey Lanerie's handling; lots to like. **BIG DOLLAR BILL** paired up a couple of solid efforts this winter at Gulfstream for trainer Ian Wilkes, but he hasn't been seen at the races since early March. \$70K son of Midnight Lute out of a Honor Grades mare has a two-turn dirt oriented pedigree but will turn back in distance and try the grass for the first time in this heat. He has shown a nice turn of foot from off the pace in his past two starts, however, and one has to admire his gritty fourth-place effort in his last race, where he stumbled badly at the start and was only beaten four lengths and change for all the money against a "live" group of maidens in South Florida; threat. **TWINSANITY** was no match for the top choice two starts back in his turf sprint debut, but he hooked a nice horse in Major Munnings (runs in today's third race) in an off-the-turf event contested over a "good" main track at Ellis 19 days ago. Bay son of Gemologist has some early foot but tends to come up bankrupt in the stretch; tab for a minor award.

SELECTIONS: 7-5-9-6

RACE EIGHT

I like how the seasoned veteran **TOO COOL** won her last start over the local turf course for a nickel by open lengths, and she comes right back off three weeks rest to face a similar field in this spot. Six-year-old mare has a beautiful turf pedigree (by Shakespeare out of the hard-knocking racemare Radu Cool) and has improved this summer since her connections moved her back on to grass three starts back. She has never been off the board over the local course and her 6-1 morning lines adds to her appeal; gets up in the shadow of the wire in a wide-open affair. **HOLD ME TIGHT** makes her first start off the claim on the drop for the Joe Sharp barn, but this chestnut daughter of Hold Me Back is a better horse on dirt and returns to the grass in this spot. It's interesting that her best recent form has been without blinkers, and the hood goes back on this afternoon. The class drop is the biggest appeal; more interested as the price increases. The deep closer **SCOUT IT OUT** should get a legitimate pace in front of her to set up her late kick, and I like how she rallied into soft fractions two starts back in a visually impressive win against similar adversaries on July 3. She broke from the parking lot in her last start and was six-wide approaching the eighth-pole and was only beaten five lengths and change for all the money, and she was wide in the penultimate winning effort. She gets a five-pound break in the weights with the apprentice Rogelio Miranda named for the assignment and is 10-1 on the morning line; don't ignore. **DISONES PRETTY** has seven second-place finishes to her credit from 13 starts lifetime on grass, but her form has improved of late with the addition of blinkers and the surface change back to the turf. Bay daughter of Discreetly Mine was only two-lengths and change off the top choice in her last start despite having to check at the quarter-pole, where she was all dressed up and had nowhere to go. She can factor with a clean trip and is 8-1 on the morning line; threat in a contentious race.

SELECTIONS: 7-3-9-8