



Belmont Park

06/18/22

Race 8 | Dirt | 8.5 Furlongs

\$40k Claiming | 3YO+

#1 Musical America

Only recent win came when allowed to relax on the lead at lowest 4F/6F in a while. Using Horse Search to scan the field faced that day on 4/30, none of those rivals were very prepared to match his speed and that doesn't seem to be the case today for him as several today can bother. His win chance is to fire from the rail and steal it, but I don't like his chances today.

#2 Prince James

He's earned some good checks after being claimed for less than he's in for today so is a well-intentioned runner here. However, not only haven't the overall running lines progressed upward through current campaign, but they lack the tightening of dirt spreads that we like to see when a runner stretches out in distance. Looks like a toss given the short value.

#3 Pioneer Spirit

Certainly an interesting one given the recent back-and-forth claims. Strong form cycle patterns and their implied improvement can sometimes be faltered by a switch-up in training regimen as the cycle leading up to the condition gets interrupted. In this case, runner got back to a fast track at 64h/70, was claimed to a new barn where he prompted a strong 78/73 CPT with an equipment change of blinkers off, but now wheels right back to the original barn first claimed from. This is a barn-to-barn type situation we've used successfully to fade favorites in the past as the flip-flop in training regimen that prompted the great condition is interrupted. For this reason, I'd be cautious to fully back this one as a win bet even though at face value the most recent Figures and Form Cycle Pattern are strong. By the figures, Value Plays is absolutely correct in making this one the Top Contender choice. However, human intervention of being able to investigate the conditions those figures were earned under, helps us identify possible outliers like this one. You can use defensively if desired but I'll be looking to get creative on this one and take a stand.

#4 Two Thirty Five

Has been on a fast upward tick lately with most recent combo being a 76/72h CPT prompting a next-out 72/73h win. Must deal with another barn switch here but as we discussed on #3, we can take some guesses on how the horse could handle that in regard to their recent condition. Runner did not take well to previous barn's new training regimen and threw a couple duds before working back up to potential. This form doesn't appear to be a pattern as runner has performed fine for new barns plenty of times in the past. Moves now to high-percentage trainer and carries more faith for me to move forward off recent upticks than the previous runner. #3 and #4 are a soft entry with the former looking like the rabbit and the latter the tortoise looking to persevere for a winning run in the lane.

#5 Chris And Dave

He's the most seasoned of the field going out for his whopping 79th competitive spin today, and is a real display of durability still popping multiple CPTs at 9 years old. Sure, there's several rivals here who's recent running lines beat this one's, but all of those rivals' abilities are assuming they'll keep current condition going off their last 2 races, while this one carries the foundation of maintaining some of those competitive running lines time and time again for years. Veteran will take advantage if some of these rivals carrying only recent good lines don't show up today.

#6 Air Attack

Tough to like here or dive in too deep as it's been a good while since he posted a running line around today's cut-back in distance that's close to competitive today. The trainer/owner combo here is 32% winners with an outstanding 86% in the money so he's got to be considered well-intentioned. On the flipside, the trainer/jockey combo is 0 for 5 last 5 years...so the relationship there seems non-existent. It looks to me like they put him where he belongs at two turns, cashed some checks including a stakes second, and now that they've made good on their investment and are in the black, he can be entered at \$40k whenever, wherever, going forward. I don't like one turn for him today.

#7 Lastchanceatglory

Lone out-of-state invader ships in off a lay-off with a trainer switch so could be any horse here. This smaller barn has done the Oaklawn acquisition shipping to Belmont move a couple times. A sprinter, True Castle, finished second going 79h-71h OPX to 78/69h BEL while their router went 64/69 OPX to 69/71 BEL also finishing second. It would seem little known barn can hold condition and running lines pretty well with this move. It's a pretty limited sample I admit, but still provides to like the last out 72/74 looks on paper like a good stalking trip with some speed but also compression to finish things if runner is up to it. Looks good enough to include on tickets as one that could be overlooked and go off as a live longshot.

Late Pick 3, Leg 1 - Use: **457** Defensive: **3**

Race 9 | Turf | 7 Furlongs

\$80k Allowance | NY-Bred 3YOs+

#1 Giramonte

A bit geared up off the lay-off on a 79h/72h and now eligible to settle down better going 2nd off the break. Tough draw though needing to either flee the rail on a 4F Figure he didn't handle well last out or else settle, get buried, and try to work inside-out through the race. He's flashed a good-looking running line here and there that make him a slight thought for inclusion but it's also always a little concerning from a herd dynamics perspective when a runner's campaign to graduating features so many minor rewards before finally getting it done.

#2 Amedeus Music

Late runner moved forward in terms of stretch acceleration between two turf tries going 51h/66 to 46h/68 PLOW. The cut-back to one turn puts him in a spot where he could see a more contentious pace set-up to run at and give him a chance late. There appear to be stronger options elsewhere that can also take advantage of the same scenario so don't force him onto a ticket to cover that situation unless you've committed to going plenty deep in this leg.

#3 Uncle George

Looks to be in good condition going 3rd off the layoff after passing some late going 73h/75 on yielding ground as well as late-running +6h turf spread at 70h/77 prior. Last year's running lines pack more punch but he's rounding back toward that form so far and should improve again today. Often leaves himself with a bit too much to do only accelerating once things are going straight ahead so I'd hold out for the 5/1 morning line or better for inclusion.

#4 Cotton

It was a good look to show some later run and pass a few with a compressed 75/75 off the lay-off even though yielding ground can make it tougher to accelerate. Lacks competitive figures in the past for one-turn events relative to today's field so could be any shot here looking to improve 2nd off the layoff. Consider if going deep in leg but not a "must use."

#5 Mr. Kringle

He was forced into his fastest 6F Figure in about a year when rival #7 tried to runaway with last race speeding up the field in its entirety and handled well coming on strong late. Good to see some year-over-year improvement present as well with 63/74h here a year ago becoming 60/76 in last. Setting down into a cutback could be a good spot for him as he should get the early runners fighting closer to each other this time providing late targets possibly weakening.

#6 Spettro

Dirt running lines to start career were not great but the spreads did tighten a little +14 to +11 to +10 which were a subtle positive pointing to a switch to turf where we indeed have seen recent improvement including a PLOW triggered. Ability to go with these uncertain but rates to be in good current condition while appreciating the switch to turf. Move to one turn and decent odds likely offered here make him worthy of consideration on ticket.

#7 Missionatthespa

Prompted a big 77/76 going a mile when flying early to set completely lone and unnecessarily contentious pace splits. There's no mystery after that showing as to why they'll try a cut-back in distance but effectively, all that may do is move the other speed closer to him early while leaving the same stretch run for closers to get up. A bit too obvious of a threat to steal the race for me to think he'll carry his weight in value on the tote board. If I'm wrong and he holds better than 4/1, he can certainly be used on tickets as lesser runners would have weakened hard given last out's race flow but he held on gamely through the wire.

#8 Veterans Beach

81h/76h when on yielding ground in last helped him hold a second place finish but appears a couple rivals from that one would have passed him if on firm ground. Lone recent win came when allowed to settle into by far lowest 4F Figure resulting in his only positive turf spread in 3 years worth of running lines displayed. Runner is most often seen being passed in stretch and doesn't have the look of one I like to back when capping turf.

#9 Forty Two Ace

He was going the right way for a turf try when finally triggering a REV on dirt and following it up with an even further display of even energy distribution with a -10 dirt spread before but then took threw up a dud triggering a lay-off. If that last race would have been a turf event, I absolutely would have been using him then. Can he pick up where he left off 90 days on the shelf is the question now. Looks like a solid enough work tab coming in, gets the ultimate equipment change (gelded), and a positive rider switch. Signs point to live here. Unsure how the 15/1 morning line will hold up but I'd be more than happy to give this one a try first on turf for double-digits.

#10 Bali's Shade

Has that single 78h/75h running line to show as respectable for today's field. Connections thought enough to try a few stakes to no avail. Has the look of a runner that just doesn't feel right at any price. If he's 30/1, you're not going to be surprised and toss without worry. If he's suddenly 5/1, you'll be following the money on a runner with a single decent running line (decent, not winning) with no foundation or durability failing to ever really string races together successfully.

#11 Golquist

Professional look to handle the main track gate-to-wire on debut when he was meant to try turf that got washed off. Respectable first try against winners but caught yielding ground, a condition that can make it tough sometimes for turfers to get going to full acceleration. Eligible to improve today but did post a -4 turf spread that day while rivals #3 and #4 both posted better turf spreads at that same spin (equating to better late acceleration). If a decision had to be made to limit runners used here, that would be the deciding factor to kick this one off before the other 2 mentioned.

#12 Courageous Oh La

Improved in 3 dirt sprints with a pair of DTOPs before wintering but only competitive in cheap maiden claimer. Through up a dud on return and was pushed from a 4.5-furlong on dirt right into 8 furlongs on turf with a quick turnaround in an aggressive move. Showed good speed out of the gate but after bobbling on his own accord and losing some momentum, he was caught chasing a runaway pacesetter on hot fractions. Without that one up there and without causing own trouble, who knows, I could see this one catching the right field some time and stealing a race at 30/1+ if the connections keep trying this optimistic spot. Perhaps one to potentially blow up a sequence one day but today's draw looks a bit too tough.

Race 9 Win Bet - 9

Late Double, Leg 1 – Use: 59

Late Pick 3, Leg 2 - Use: 579 Consider: 36 Going Deep: 4211

Race 10 | Inner Turf | 11 Furlongs

\$90k Maiden Special Weight | 3YOs+

#1 Forwardly

Was plenty deep for a debut horse with a +21 turf spread as a juvenile. After wintering, was closer to the pack but failed to re-display that previous late kick at +9 turf spread. Household trainer name will draw money here but this one makes much more sense than their soft entry in the #3 holding much better pedigree for this spot and will get a ground-saving set-up. First off the break was a disappointment vs expectation but eligible to redeem in this spot. No need to take too short of odds if the CB fans are out in too strong of force as we'll point out several nice options in this race but keep an eye on this one nonetheless.

#2 Stjames

Posted turf spreads over +22 using either Final-4F or Final-6F formulas, the only runner that can say that. Will be left with a lot to do but everyone's going their furthest distance here and he offers longshot odds. Worthy of inclusion if you have the budget to include.

#3 Thistle

Hasn't really been in the race in 2 starts but remains eligible to improve without notice given the barn. With a good set-up and move forward, last out's PLOW could figure well into this extra distance. Even so, will be used defensively by many due to trainer and I might consider that as well if the turf pedigree wasn't so weak. These turf tries could easily just be intended as stamina-builders before a campaign on the main track.

#4 Braille

He was a COMP runner on debut sprinting, triggered REV first time routing on synthetic, then popped a DTOP on dirt while still maintaining a higher Final Figure than 4F Figure. He didn't threaten in any of those but it still looks like a trifecta of moves that indicate the surface switch and added distance could go well for him. Dam was a Grade III winner going long on turf.

#5 Remote

Bucked his rider at the start then proceeded through and inside runners, tracked, then responded when engaged. Sure, he was a buck-20 light on weight but I don't know his trip would have looked any different with an instructor aboard. Quite the interesting loose runner to watch if you get a chance to replay Belmont's 5th from May 20th. Anyways, the turf try that did count wasn't overly impressive but not bad as the 62h/70 is a decent building-block to now try more distance where rivals should allow much more relaxed 4F/6F for him to try.

#6 Acamar

A bit forward on turf debut at 74h/70 but now will try a much slower approach while reaching out a great deal in distance. Full sister has wanted nothing to do with any surface but turf where she graduated second on grass then set the pace before fading to 4th in a good try against winners. Half-sibling also enjoyed the green stuff hitting the board in 8 of 10 turf starts. If you like pedigree, could be a good longshot to throw on ticket if budget allows. If you're more concerned with runner's own ability, the sprint try lacks the compression to make this stretchout a confidently positive move, and you never like to see an auction price 3x lower than the stud fee.

#7 Hooky Player

Turf spreads are quickly going the right way for more distance progressing +2 to +7h to +16h while looking to move off a TDL here, a more powerful sub-pattern of the PLOW. Typically, handicappers consider maidens going from claimer to allowance a no-go zone but the price compared to the very strong form cycle pattern here make him look too good not to have.

#8 Hashtag No Wonder

Been around the block compared to this field now trying 4th turf course of career and 7th start since December failing to close the deal as a board-hitter in 5 of those last 6 tries. Failed to close the deal when dropped to a \$35k tag, went back to allowance company off the PLOW and missed again. Was then suddenly made the favorite when shipping to Churchill but again not enough late. Looks like a runner that's going to make a lot of people nervous enough to throw on their tickets but I don't find him worth it being outrun late in many different environments now. The pedigree isn't anything great in regard to adding distance either.

#9 Left On Boylston

Makes tough jump from a tag to none here stretching out while lacking the large turf spreads others have shown so distance could be a question. Gets a nice weight break from bug but rider has had better luck on main track than turf and is also a little rusty at the moment with just 3 mounts last 10 days. Inclined to pass.

#10 Good Medicine

Did well to try and steal it at 10 furlongs at a huge price last out on a 49/65 running line. Won't get anywhere near that price now but fair enough as it was a good looking try in last to hold the way he did. After he led through a half, the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th place runners eventually finished well behind him in the bottom half while the 5th place runner at that point who overtook him was a well-bet Chad runner.

Late Double, Leg 2 – Use: 4 7 10

Late Pick 3, Leg 3 - Use: 4 7 10 **Consider:** 1 **Going Deep:** 2 5