Santa Anita
Friday, 12/30/22

Race 1 | Turf | 8 Furlongs

I could see myself at least 4-deep here in horizontals. Nice thing about kick-off legs is you'll get to see who's getting backed in both the win pool and double probables before making a decision how to kick off the sequence the best way.

#1 Mahina
She stood in the gate and spotted the field a ton of ground before taking off but her next 3 internal fractions ranked in the Top 4 of that full field including a last 2F matching today's co-favorite #8. Looking for a better start 2nd out and with the biggest turf spread in the field at +9 (next closest is +6), she looks like a live longshot play likely cold on the board again.

#8 Bolt's Broad
Plenty in here have gone 8 panels at DMR with this one ranking the best running line at 67/74 which is also backed by this runner carrying best running line here at SA as well.

#4 Tea Tree Bay (GB)
Beware the lone invader. Ran well enough on synthetic to like the turf here and has been putting in good local morning work.

#2 Ancient Peace
Blinkers On are typically more of an experiment than a definitively positive move (if you're making an equipment change, you're trying to correct something). This is why 2nd time blinkers is typically a much more powerful angle. However, this one was a bit hard to handle on debut so it's plenty logical in this case to expect improvement right here and now.

#3 Carson Jen
One to consider if there's talk of the turf having some give to it after the area got some rain Wednesday. It may not have soaked up enough to matter, but worth mentioning anyway soft turf can make it tough for runners to get the traction they need to fully accelerate to potential come stretch-time which can give pacesetters some extra help to try stealing races. This one has a big 4F Figure advantage on the sheets.

#10 La Peer
Failed favorite twice now and threat to do it again. The Final Figures are merely competitive, not better than the rest; and her turf spreads have come up the same.

Race 2 | Dirt | 8 Furlongs

As you can see from the list of 4F / Final Figures below from the same 8F trip at LRC, this field stacks up quite competitively against each other and with different styles of energy distribution as well. It can go a long way for coverage in a Pick N ticket if you can hit a competitive race like this skinny. I'll offer my suggestion for a 2-horse stand.

#1 – 68.0 / 74.1
#2 – 71.3 / 74.5
#3 – 65.9 / 71.6
#4 – 67.4 / 72.7
#5 – 70.2 / 73.7
#6 – 70.1 / 73.5

#6 Sonic Brees
Did well to stretch out to two turns for first time and despite losing ground on both turns was able to sustain through well enough to trigger a Reversal (REV). Hoping for better stalking trip today and think this one sits under the radar offering a good price in what looks like a pretty competitive field.

#2 Allaboutthemoney
Sustained the highest 4F Figure in last while holding the highest Final Figure so ranks a must use.

#7 Warrens Candy Man
Bit of an invader in the sense we have 6 familiar rivals then this one seemingly well-placed second off the claim. I think he'll be pretty popular here, but I'm looking to fade based on past route lines being quite forward-spent compared to the "compression" the rest of this field has shown recently.

Race 3 | Turf | 8 Furlongs | $100k Eddie Logan Stakes

#5 Nagirroc
May be a single for many players exiting the BC Juvenile Turf hitting the board behind a pair of well-respected Euros. He brings a +13.5 turf spread while no one else in this race has ever come close to a double-digit spread indicating he could be very tough in stretch against these. Figure Motion who doesn't typically enter here often is bringing runners out with this course set to host the 2023 BC.

#4 First Peace
If looking for an upset shot, he broke maiden at this trip and is off a 71/76 TDL, a strong Form Cycle Pattern that indicates future success for turf horses as it signals the point where they've turned the corner fundamentally for improved energy distribution and stretch acceleration. Any give in the track would be a plus for him.

Race 4 | Dirt | 8 Furlongs

#5 Nolo Contesto
Dropped into the claiming ranks for 6-year old season, the 76h/70 at DMR off the break is best of this field's SoCal spins. With 7 seconds in career, his PPs give the look of a hanger who can't get it done, but this has been more the product of Nolo always being a "grinder" type runner that never really met peak expectation facing tougher throughout career than today's rivals.

Race 5 | Turf | 8 Furlongs

#9 Shadow Creek (IRE)
Slow to start, it's tough to determine if there was some burst ready in stretch as runner was buried inside and got checked bad shortly after the top. Off a 62.7 / 72.1 debut featuring a +10 turf spread that didn't even feature an honest finish, you have to imagine this one has room for dramatic improvement today. Switches to Berrios whose specialty is the stretch run on turf. Beat today's favorite on debut over in Ireland. Plenty of upside here and price should be right.

#2 Carver
Can be the pacesetter here off a 77h/76 last out. Early speed is fundamentally less important on turf in general, but when you've got full fields of maidens, it becomes exponentially scarier. In reality, a chunk of this field will never graduate, and another chunk is not yet confident enough to pass rivals or navigate traffic. The reality is he's up against a much smaller field than listed, and when you've got a runner that appears very likely to be able to grab the lead, they have to be respected.

#3 Single Track Mind (IRE)
Prompted a PLOW in last with a nice jump in turf spread of +12 off a 58.6 / 70.4. This form cycle pattern signals soon improvement for turf horses and with the preceding back figures at 71.4 / 74.1, he ranks plenty eligible for win chances when he runs back to that line here and then some.

#7 Looks Rare
Good gate speed on dirt often translates to the same when trying turf so this one rates a shot at spoiling #2 Carver's plans to control the front and perhaps with the less stressful bounce of turf, this one just keeps going? Longshot angle is there if you've got room to throw on a ticket.

#10 San Anton (IRE)
ML favorite makes stateside debut for strong connections at these parameters. However, best Timeform rating came on debut when beaten by the #9 and subsequent ratings regressed. Probably plenty live but that's not the summary of a runner I'd call a great favorite. Feel like connections are stronger than the actual horse, and I'll be looking to beat.

Race 6 | Dirt | 6.5 Furlongs

#1 Sugar Sugar
Owns best 4F Figure and competitive Final Figure on 3 different tracks stacked against these so big chance to wire the field here.

#5 Big Bell
Older facing mostly sophomores here, her routing line from last features turnback figures (4F/6F pulled out of the race) at 69.3 / 63.1 with an NPT. Big threat here considering she ran a competitive race inside of a route compared to what today's rivals ran just sprinting the 6 panels.

#2 Worthiness
Outside shot to upset here off the NPT showing some compression in the running line that could have this one going in the lane if race flow falls apart up top.

Race 7 | Turf | 6.5 Furlongs

The downhill course can be a bit of a scramble, especially when you get a field not-so-experienced with it and many runners making surface and distance changes. Tough not to go deep in this leg looking for a good price. We'll touch on them all quick but strongest allegiances lie with **#6**, **#7**, and **#11**.

#1 She's Got A Way – Needs to fabricate improvement here from summer form.

#2 Honey Jar – Just missed on this downhill course on a nice 81.6 / 78.1 running line before the break but could be any horse here possibly needing one to get back into things but a threat on previous ability nonetheless.

#3 Briefcase Girl – Some good compressed sprints on resume and nice work tab for return but tough to trust as she faded to last in initial downhill course try.

#4 Big Novel – Current condition questionable to be trying something new like this downhill. The recent dirt start was a sharp regression from paceline ability a year ago.

#6 Kitty Kitana (GB) – Growing turf spreads three in a row while coming off a PLOW makes this one a serious threat in the lane.

#7 Rose Maddox – Exacta 7 of 9 while competitive on all 3 surfaces and a consistent showing of compression in the spreads. Has to be considered a threat for at least exotics if offering double-digits here as the ML is.

#8 American Lily – after a pair of main track romps to start career, faltered in last keeping the trajectory of regression from big debut.

#9 Izzy Em – Seemed coming into her own off a win and a TDL pattern but now question as to if that trajectory continues now transferred to new barn. It's not that I don't trust the new barn, it's that they had a $13k purchase out of a $160k stud fee going the right way and now the training regimen getting tweaked presents somewhat of a question mark.

#10 Slevka (FR)
Did best work overseas on or near the lead which could translate to having to adjust to being relegated to mid-pack or so over here. Barn is really good with foreign shippers but also much better debuting at a flat 6.5 furlongs than on the tricky downhill course.

#11 One Silk Stocking
The one turf sprint running line stacks up well against these and Dettori aboard is a plus.

#12 Aas de Faust (GB) – One sprint try was respectable but overall form has been declining with each of her usual routes.

#13 Pop Pop's Dream – Router has had some good turf spreads in the past but now must set down sprinting off a long break likely needing one here.

#14 Speed Lane – hit board at this spin off a break and gone routing both dirt and turf since. New barn trains by racing so expect they put into the horse what they wanted and now should improve second try on downhill if drawn in.

Race 8 | Dirt | 8 Furlongs

#5 Candy For Carmel
Runner was posting forward-spent dirt spreads earlier in year before a PLOW/REV combo recently displaying improved distribution. Can move back to two turns here off the compressed 68h/66h sprinting with success.

#6 Egomania
Nice step forward against tougher in last coming off a previous NPT. Should continue forward here back down to softer.

#7 Rogue Son
Three races in current campaign have seen the dirt spread go +3.5 to +1.1 to +0.3. This incremental progress in energy distribution signals the stretch out in distance could be a big positive for this one. Runner goes first off the claim here so we'll have to hope the new training regimen doesn't throw this trajectory off.

#1 Sippin N Kissin
Broke a 70 Final Figure in a route for first time, something many here still haven't done.

Race 9 | Turf | 8 Furlongs | $100k Blue Norther S.

#5 G Laurie
Comes off a deep PLOW at +15 from a Grade I event. Others went on to try the Breeders' Cup while she came up scratched with illness. Have to assume she's back to 100% here for Motion and the class of this race.

#12 Thebestisyettobe (IRE)
Not the biggest move mathematically but still qualified for the PLOW while also receiving a Top Contender designation from PF's Value Plays' algorithm.

#4 Decorated My Life (IRE)
Only a slightly better Final Figure and turf spread than others at the same spin (2, 7, 8, 11, 12) so a difference in odds can easily end up being the value between using this one or looking elsewhere in that group.

#10 Pleasant Wave
Improved turf spread between the two sprint tries from -10 to -5. Needs improvement but she's plenty eligible off that positive progression to appreciate the easier fractions of two turns and offers a big price if you have room to try on a ticket.

#8 Tea N Conversation
Big move forward to the 70.7 / 76.4 winner in last predicted off a PLOW/REV combo. New and exciting form? or a peak that can't be repeated without more foundation first?

#6 Manhattan Jungle (IRE)
Did well to last a bit with BC rivals early but ultimately couldn't sustain. Previous Euro campaign did feature some concerns about getting the job done as well so finishing has been an ongoing issue. Tough to trust here especially if only going off around the 4/1 ML.