



LAUREL PARK

HANDICAPPING GUIDE for FRIDAY, OCT. 2

TODAY'S SELECTIONS FROM THE LAUREL PARK TEAM



DAN ILLMAN

RACE 1: 4-1-3-10
RACE 2: 2-5-1-4
RACE 3: 4-8-2-6
RACE 4: 7-1-6-4
RACE 5: 11-10-9-6
RACE 6: 3-4-8-5
RACE 7: 3-1-6-9
RACE 8: 4-2-1-3
RACE 9: 2-8-7-3



JOHN PIASSEK

1-8-4-10
4-5-6-1
4-8-6-9
6-7-1-5
6-11-9-10
3-5-6-8
1-7-3-10
1-2-4-6
2-1-8-6



DAVE RODMAN

8-6-4-1
4-6-3-1
8-10-6-4
8-6-5-4
7-4-5-9
5-8-4-2
10-9-2-3
4-1-3-6
6-2-4-5



TIM TULLOCK

4-1-8-10
5-6-1-4
4-8-6-2
7-6-10-4
7-10-4-9
8-5-3-10
9-8-1-7
4-1-5-6
2-4-1-7

First post is Noon ET with 12% takeout on Value Pick 5 wagers (first five races; last five races)

- TMJC's "Today at the Races" morning simulcast show LIVE on X [@LaurelPark](#) at 11AM ET for late changes + today's top tickets and best plays.
- Follow the action throughout the day on your preferred ADW, on X [@LaurelPark](#) and [@Danillman_MJC](#), on Instagram [@marylandjockeyclub](#) and on TikTok [@marylandjockeyclub](#).
- Get FREE PPs for today's card from *Daily Racing Form*! To access, visit www.laurelpark.com/handicapping-wagering/ and scroll down.

TODAY'S ANALYSIS - by Dan Illman

>> RACE 1

1. PHIL'S PRINCE

2. PUNXSUTAWNEY PHIL

3. WALKING IN MEMPHIS

The first post time is 12 pm ET, and there are two "Value Pick 5" wagers, each with a LOW 12% takeout rate. **PHIL'S PRINCE** received a nice trip and ride when scoring at Colonial. After being jostled at the start, he saved ground at the back for most of the way, split rivals on the second turn, cut the corner into the stretch, then eased past the leader in the final furlong. The barn went 2 for the last 10 (20%, \$3.94 ROI) with last-out winners. Also want to use both **PUNXSUTAWNEY PHIL** and **WALKING IN MEMPHIS** in multiple-race wagers. The former chased favored Reckless at Colonial and was flattered when that one repeated in a \$35,000 starter-optional here with a 77 Beyer. Walking in Memphis has good tactical speed, and might try to grab the early lead this time around.

>> RACE 2

1. WIN NO JOKE

2. BACKINTHEWOODS

3. ADDY'S LADDY T N T

WIN NO JOKE usually doesn't perform well at Timonium, so I'm willing to give him a mulligan for the most recent start, a sharp half-mile race where he made up almost six lengths in the late stages. Gave a respectable try two back over a more conventional Delaware surface. Tracked from the pocket over a speed-friendly track, cut the corner, then only finished in a one-paced fashion. He is a late-runner that needs pace help, so demand value on the toteboard. **BACKINTHEWOODS** tracked from the pocket two weeks ago, was urged along on the turn, split rivals, then tried hard for second behind the favored winner after altering back inside. His early speed plays very well in this race for a barn that went 4 for 14 (29%, \$2.10 ROI) on dirt between 9/19 and 9/27. Stablemate **ADDY'S LADDY T N T** set a pressured pace inside the 5-2 fourth-finisher, then stayed on gamely for second in a recent two-turn route. The winner next placed in a dime "beaten" claimer with a 70 Beyer. He's likely more effective at these shorter distances and has enough speed to stay within striking range. THE COUNT IS ON dominated the field in a two-turn sprint at Timonium, his first start following a short layoff. Expect a late kick.

>> RACE 3

1. DANNER

2. FORTUNE HILL

3. HONORARY AMERICAN

DANNER brushed the gate, then rushed up to duel with the 13-1 runner-up before tiring along the fence. Might try rating tactics, owns several competitive speed figures, and could be set for his best in the third start following a 315-day break. **FORTUNE HILL** listed as a Laurel vet scratch (sick) on 9/12, tracked outside, made a four-wide bid, then tried hard inside the winner after being late to change leads. That race hasn't come back very strong just yet (five next-out starters; none hit the board; 41 Beyer top). Seems adaptable to any sort of pace scenario. **HONORARY AMERICAN** showed enough promise as a 2-year-old to earn a trip to Royal Ascot, but he missed over a year of racing and was purchased for \$4,500 in June. Legged up for this with three two-turn tries on dirt, and might be more effective on turf. Seemed uncomfortable racing down inside in most recent grass appearance, a race that produced Global Prosperity (hit the board in his next two with an 81 Beyer top). SIG has every reason to need a race as he returns from a 721-day layoff, but he faced two next-out winners in his most recent start when wired by a Saratoga shipper. The runner-up has since won six races with a 92 Beyer top. FREE DROP OPS might have aimed too high in his turf debut, a race where he was wired by the favorite through slow fractions. TAX AND TAGS has speed, and seems well-entered. The runner-up two back then hit the board in his next two with stereo 59 Beyers.

>> RACE 4

1. MAKE IT QUICK

2. TETHERED SOUL

3. MILITARY GRADE

I thought the inside was good on 9/11, and **MAKE IT QUICK** pushed the rail-skimming, pace-setting winner from the outside before staying strong for second. The third-finisher then took a \$7,500 "non-two" seller with a 61 Beyer. This barn sent out three winners since 9/25. **TETHERED SOUL** didn't seem very comfortable around those tight Timonium turns, but he ran well over a more conventional track two back at Penn National and has earned some solid speed figures over this surface. This barn went 6 for 11 (55%, \$5.67 ROI) between 9/13 and 9/25. **MILITARY GRADE** likely gained needed fitness when returning from a 399-day layoff. Wired that evening at Charles Town, he tried to wind up a four-to-five wide bid under urging and was game to get third on the wire. Toledo lands here instead of Sin Sin. **COACHES BURNING** battled on a hot pace at Delaware, then tired after being very late to change leads. The winner next placed in a quarter starter there with a 65 Beyer. Expect good speed.

>> RACE 5

1. BALTIC

2. GO TO BINGO

3. AIRBRUSH

BALTIC only needs one scratch to play, and he was wired at Monmouth last month after being bumped at the start. He graduated sprinting on the lawn two back and would benefit if this pace heats up as expected. The barn sent out three winners at Delaware between 9/16 and 9/17. **GO TO BINGO** was bumped at the start, stalked a fast pace while outside, made a six-wide bid into the stretch, then gained ground despite hopping back to his left lead. Finished ahead of four of these and has hit the board in his last three. **AIRBRUSH** saved ground in midpack, altered outside to split three wide and bumped an outer foe, then was ridden out in a good-looking maiden win. This seems like a pretty strong class hike. **GIMME TWO SHOTS** (wore a hood) set a fast four-ply place while three wide and in between, and understandably tired last month. Might have to deal with similar pressure here. If this pace falls apart, keep an eye on **SALVO TRIGGER**, who cuts back in distance after facing Blessings Bestowed (hit board in his four starts with a 71 Beyer top).

>> RACE 6

1. AYNİ

2. RUSSIAN IRIS

3. OLD MAN'S DREAM

AYNI broke outwards at Colonial, pressed the pace from in between under very confident handling, streaked to the lead turning for home, then held second over a track that might have favored closers. The third-finisher next ran third in a special weight here with a 51 Beyer. Barring a quick first-time starter, she should be right up on the pace. **RUSSIAN IRIS** (\$4,000 weanling) is out of an unraced half-sister to Grade 2-winning turf router Strike Charmer and multiple juvenile stakes-placed synthetic sprinter Sweet Dreams (won debut; 70 synthetic Beyer). The second dam was a stakes-winning turf miler (96 Beyer top). Solid workouts, but might improve on grass down the road. The barn went 5 for the last 20 (25%, \$2.75 ROI) with juvenile debut runners in dirt sprints. **OLD MAN'S DREAM** took a lot of money when debuting against seven other first-time starters and tried hard for second. The barn went 6 for the last 20 (30%, \$2.04 ROI) with juvenile second-out maidens on dirt. **SORICA** was wired by a runaway at Timonium, a race where they ran 1-2-3 around. **BELLE SHOT** is out of stakes-placed dirt sprinter Phantom Shot (79 dirt Beyer).

>> RACE 7

1. WATCH OUT WORLD

2. SLIPPIN JIMMY

3. DAUFUSKIE ISLAND

WATCH OUT WORLD stalked the pace from between rivals, swung out to split foes while five wide in the upper stretch, then finished evenly without threatening a tough group of ratings rivals. This drop in class works for a barn that has sent out live horses at the meet. **SLIPPIN JIMMY** saved ground in midpack, was steadied while in behind rivals on the turn, altered course to split foes four-to-five wide, and rallied stoutly to beat four of these, including next-out winner Noble Jon. Might be the best pure closer in the field. **DAUFUSKIE ISLAND** is still unexposed on turf, with his only prior outing on the surface coming in New York two years ago. Tracked a fast pace while three wide that day, then steadied in between horses when already beaten. The winner of that race is now multiple stakes-placed with a 94 Beyer top. He has good early speed. Lopez departs for UPSIDEDOWN MAN. BOAT'S A ROCKIN and NOBLE JON deserve consideration if able to escape the Also Eligible list.

>> RACE 8

1. LAW SCHOOL

2. TURKISH BREEZE

3. MILA CANDY

LAW SCHOOL got back on track with a rallying win at Delaware last month. Broke okay despite getting out a bit, tracked the pace while three-to-four wide, made a three-wide bid on the turn, and drew clear. The barn went 7 for the last 21 (33%, \$2.35 ROI) with last-out winners in the third start following a 61- to 120-day layoff. **TURKISH BREEZE** wired them four back at Colonial, then was wired by odds-on Mila Candy in a slow-paced affair at Colonial. Ran okay on turf against tough competition in her last two starts, and might focus better switching back to dirt and removing blinkers. **MILA CANDY** dueled with the 5-1 runner-up before tiring at Colonial. The fourth-finisher then won a first-level allowance here with a 72 Beyer. A nice outside post gives the rider options, and she should be right there when they turn for home. LAST GIFT should show early ability after battling the favored winner for the lead in a sharp half-mile sprint at Timonium. There's a chance this pace gets hot, and that helps DISNEY BELLE, who kicked down conditioned claimers at Colonial. CHILLY GIRL faced a decent group in her first off the claim and can also show a late kick.

>> RACE 9

1. OCCUPY

2. SHANGHAI ROSE

3. RONNAROCK

OCCUPY sat a loose pocket behind a solid pace, angled three wide into the stretch, made the lead, and was kicked down in the waning strides. This looks like a very reasonable spot, and she should show good speed against this group. **SHANGHAI ROSE** was bumped at the start, then set a pressured pace inside the 7-2 sixth-finisher when racing two turns in her turf debut. Tired badly in the lane and was eased through the final sixteenth. The shorter distance might help, and she's quick enough to obtain a forward position. **RONNAROCK** is out of a half-sister to multiple Grade 3-winning synthetic sprinter Atlantic Hurricane (97 synthetic Beyer), and shows some solid work for her debut. VICTORIA'S SONG pressed the more-experienced, odds-on winner through slow fractions in her lone turf start, then was second best. DIVINE SUNSHINE sat the pocket, then tired when wired against special weight foes.

TODAY'S HOT TRAINER STATS

RACE 1

#4 - Phil's Prince

Trainer: Madison Meyers

Last-Out Winners: 2 for 10 (20%, \$3.94 ROI)

RACE 2

#5 - Backnthewoods

Trainer: Jose Corrales

Between 9/19 and 9/27, Dirt: 4 for 14 (29%, \$2.10 ROI)

RACE 4

#1 - Tethered Soul

Trainer: Hugh McMahon

Between 9/13 and 9/25: 6 for 11 (55%, \$5.67 ROI)

RACE 6

#4 - Russian Iris

Trainer: Robbie Bailes

2-Year-Old, Debut Runners, Dirt Sprints: 5 for 20 (25%, \$2.75 ROI)

#8 - Old Man's Dream

Trainer: Anthony Farrior

2-Year-Old, Maidens, Second Start Dirt: 6 for 20 (30%, \$2.04 ROI)

RACE 8

#4 - Law School

Trainer: Jamie Ness

Last-Out Winners, Third After 61-120 Days: 7 for 21 (33%, \$2.35 ROI)

TRIPS AND TIPS – by Will Humphrey, *In The Money Media*

Trip Notes - Recent performances that deserve an asterisk. All others: trust the past-performances.

Race 1: OC35k/SAL28k, 3YO+, 1 1/16 Miles, Turf

Other notes:

- **#1 PUNXSUTAWNEY PHIL** ran a huge race at Colonial last time despite a slightly wider-than-ideal trip; big player if retaining form back at 1 1/16 miles.
- In a furiously run race (fractions of 23.63, 46.26), **#8 ZEVON** sat much closer to the pace than the three horses who beat him, and he also made quite an early charge at the leaders considering the pace scenario; it wasn't a total surprise to see him fade late and under different, better circumstances today, he may be able to step back in the right direction.

Race 2: Claiming 12.5k, 3YO+, 5 ½ Furlongs, Dirt

Horse	Race	Trip	Notes
#2 WIN NO JOKE	Claiming 5k, TIM, 4F, Fast Dirt, 08/28/26 – 5 th	Out-spied early; chased clear leader and pursuing pack from 12L off the lead into the turn; saved ground while closing steadily into the lane, then finished well but could not reach frame; nearest finish, galloped out very strongly.	A very promising effort with today's 5 ½ furlong trip in mind: he closed well over the heavily SPEED BIASED track and galloped out in front of two of today's re-opposing rivals shortly after the wire. Based on this effort, he'll step forward for the extra ground today.

Other notes:

- **#4 THE COUNT IS ON** put forth a huge effort at Timonium last time after being severely jostled and losing his back end at the start; player right back.
- **#5 BACKNTHEWOODS** failed to bag the lead from the rail last time and then found himself in behind a slow pace; a wider draw may have seen him to slightly better effect in that race considering how it unfolded; big player right back.
- **#6 HELDISH** didn't quite do enough to earn an upgrade for his last effort; however, after being bumped and pinched at the start, he then found himself pace compromised in the modestly run affair that saw speed hold well; he's likely capable of more with a cleaner break and better (faster) setup.

Race 3: Maiden Claiming 16k, 3-6YO, 5 ½ Furlongs, Turf

Horse	Race	Trip	Note
#4 DANNER	Maiden Claiming 16k, CNL, 5 1/2F, Firm Turf, 09/04/26 – 5 th	Pinched, steadied shortly after start; settled ~6-7L off even pace, then took up slightly entering turn; regrouped and traveled powerfully under patient handling to 5/16; waited on heels in 2P rounding into the lane, then advanced a little under a hold; attempted to make a run through the stretch thereafter but could never find room and largely remained unasked until it was far, far too late; beaten just 2L.	His two back effort (when he ran an abnormally low figure off the bench): Surprised the chart caller didn't pick up on this BRUTAL trip off the layoff; it's easy to envisage him winning this return effort. Major player again third back.

Other notes:

- **#1 OLIVAR EN FUEGO** broke very sharp from the rail on debut but was then quickly shuffled back before blowing the turn and stopping. While the chart comment might make it sound like he had a rough trip, it seemed more a case of him just being green; he can only improve.
- **#7 GUERRILLA MAGIC** bore out on the turn last time.

Race 4: Claiming 12.5k, 3YO+, 6 Furlongs, Dirt**Other notes:**

- **#1 TETHERED SOUL** sat a wider-than-ideal trip at Timonium last time.
- There was a speed bias present when **#3 YES CHEF** finished 2nd courtesy of a forward trip last time. Note: he was also caught in an awkward position contesting the pace between horses early which prevented him from relaxing; in the end, it made no difference to the result (he was 2nd best), but a better position may help him today.
- **#4 COUCHES BURNING** didn't do enough to earn an upgrade at Delaware last time; however, he did form part of a fast early pace while racing over a closer-friendly track, neither of which helped his chances.
- In a race where horses struggled to get involved from the back, **#6 MILITARY GRADE** ran a nice race off the bench last time, overcoming a wider-than-ideal trip to snatch 3rd; eligible to step forward second back today.
- Although he sat a great trip and had a perfect pace setup, it might be worth noting that **#8 FLYING TO WORK** was very restless in the gate and then pinched when racing on the turf last time, instantly placing him on the back-foot.
- **#9 EL JUNIOR** became caught in a speed duel that ultimately took its toll on him late at Timonium last time; if rationing out his speed more efficiently and holding the game level of form, there's a chance he can reverse form with #5 WHO SAYS SO back at 6F.

Race 5: Claiming 16k, 3YO+, 5 ½ Furlongs, Turf

Horse	Race	Trip	Note
#6 GIMME TWO SHOTS	Claiming 16k, LRL, 5 1/2F, Firm Turf, 09/11/26 – 5 th	Dueled through solid fractions between horses in the 3P racing to the top of the lane, then battled on gamely to the wire but faded late on.	The pace that he contested collapsed in this race which, considering that he was also losing ground three wide on the turn, makes his 2 ½ length defeat very admirable; if able to save a little more ground and ration out his speed more efficiently, he should be capable of more.
#7 HOPPETOSSE	Claiming 16k, LRL, 5 1/2F, Firm Turf, 09/11/26 – 4 th	Sent from rail; dueled through fast fractions into the lane, then battled willingly to the line but could not fend off a trio of closers and settled for 4 th .	He did best of the speed in this race that saw the pace collapse (top three finishers were 6th, 7th and 9th at first call) – UPGRADE; a wider draw may help him ration out his speed more efficiently today; player right back.
#11 BALTIC	Allowance, MTH, 5 1/2F, 09/12/26 – 4 th	Bumped hard start, away slowly in last; worked forward to chase leading trio form 6L back racing into the turn; held position under pressure approaching the top of the lane, then finished with late interest but had way too much to do.	Speed was good on the turf all meet at Monmouth and this race was no different (top three finishers filled those positions throughout; 4-of-5 races this day were won in gate-to-wire fashion); he, therefore – while facing winners for the first time – did well to finish as close as he did after taking a very hard bump at the start and racing against the ‘flow; big player down in class third back.

Other notes:

- **#3 MY CAPTAIN** was involved in a contested pace battle that led to speed collapsing last time – possibly excuse him that defeat.
- **#4 GOODLUCK ROAD** didn’t do enough to earn an upgrade last out and it’s hard to argue that he was ever really going to hit it board; however, he did have to take back slightly when in tight ~1/2 (although this was no bad thing actually given the pace scenario), then he briefly lacked room at the 3/16 pole which slightly prevented him from building forward momentum; capable of more but maybe not enough to reverse form with a few familiar foes.
- After a very solid try facing winners for the first time two-back, **#5 MASTER NIBBLES** simply failed to stay a mile at Delaware last time; best to look past that run and expect him to rediscover his better form back down in trip today.
- **#9 AIRBRUSH** broke his maiden nicely in a race where (other than him) nobody did much running from the back at Colonial last time; he won under just a hand ride, possibly indicating that there’s more to come; today’s long stretch should suit.
- **#10 GO TO BINGO** ran well last time and is deserving of respect right back; it should be noted, however, that he was the beneficiary of the aforementioned hot pace contested by GIMME TWO SHOTS and HOPPETOSSE.

Race 6: Maiden Claiming 35k, 2YO (F), 5 ½ Furlongs, Dirt**Other notes:**

- There was a speed bias present at Laurel the day that **#2 POOR JACQUI**, **#8 OLD MAN’S DREAM** and **#10 HER DECISION** each made their debuts in race 3; OMD and HD were both possibly aided by the track conditions in that race whereas PJ was negatively impacted and might be capable of taking the largest step forward of the trio today.
- **#6 SORICA** did not handle the turn overly well at Timonium on debut and may be more comfortable on a conventional track second out.

Race 7: OC12k/SAL8k, 3YO+, 5 ½ Furlongs, Turf

Horse	Race	Trip	Note
#11 BOATS A ROCKIN (AE)	Claiming 10k, CNL, 5 1/2F, Firm Turf, 09/05/26 – 7 th	Tracked even pace on rail from ~3L back racing to upper stretch, then came under a hand ride upon straightening and began to steadily creep closer along the rail until he was put in very tight ~1/8 pole and forced to check hard, ending all chance.	He looked to be coming with a menacing run along the rail at the time of interference and is definitely in better form that this race indicates; if drawing in, it wouldn't be a surprise to see him play a role today now back with Kulp.

Other Notes:

- **#1 SLIPPIN JIMMY** put up a very strong effort in victory at Colonial last time, bursting past almost the entire field in the lane despite the pace having been just even; he briefly had to await room racing to upper stretch too, and if he'd been able to get out sooner, one suspects he could have won by further; massive player making debut for White right back.
- While accepting that **#7 DERZ SMART** sat a good trip and received a nice pace setup last time, it's probably worth highlighting that he was not aggressively ridden from the gate and not asked for a true finishing effort until ultimately too late; if in similar (or even better form) second back, a different ride could well see him take a meaningful step forward; respected.
- Although **#8 CLAUDEE BOY** did have to check slightly ~3/8 pole last time, it was insignificant and not the reason he was beaten.
- **#12 NOBLE JON** kicked clear under a mild hand ride, then was wrapped up late when winning easily at Meadowlands last week; he definitely had more to offer; player if getting in.

Race 8: OC40k/SAL32k, 3YO+ (F), 6 Furlongs, Dirt**Other notes:**

- **#1 DISNEY BELLE** was very game when winning at Colonial last time: she was under pressure and in tight between foes (an intimidating spot) rounding the lane, then saw off the challengers and kicked clear with a great attitude; thriving, player.
- There was a very strong speed bias at Timonium when **#5 LAST GIFT** won two-back.

Race 9: Maiden Claiming 25k, 2YO (F), 5 ½ Furlongs, Turf**Other notes:**

- Speed held really well when **#1 VICTORIA'S SONG** finished 2nd courtesy of a forward trip on debut at Monmouth (possible downgrade); she then didn't look entirely comfortable in behind kickback when drawing the rail on the dirt last time (excuse); drops today.
- Having been outpaced early, **#6 CATTY'S ANGEL** circled 4W on the turn and then finished nicely (despite lugging in a touch) going 4F at Timonium last time; she was the only runner to make up any ground at all (the running order otherwise remained the same) and she finished like today's trip would be more to her liking; not discounted second out now switching to turf.
- After showing early speed, **#8 SHANGHAI ROSE** failed to see out the 7 1/2F distance at Delaware last time; today's 5 1/2F test on the turf could be her best game.

Horses to Follow

R1: PHIL'S PRINCE (9/2 ML)

Having had just five reported workouts leading into his return off the layoff, it was no surprise to see PHIL'S PRINCE step forward notably from that effort over yielding turf when running out a strong winner of a \$50k NW2 claimer at Colonial last time. He remains relatively unexposed (especially with blinkers on), and any further progress should make him competitive right back, with an extra 1/16 working in his favor.

R7: BOAT'S A ROCKIN (5/2 ML)

Trainer Brandon Kulp has been responsible for fifteen of BOAT'S A ROCKIN's eighteen career victories and, provided he draws in off the also-eligible list, the pair have a strong chance of adding to their haul in race seven after Kulp reclaimed the likable veteran last out. In that last start, the GSP son of RED ROCKS (IRE) finished seventh behind a couple of re-opposing foes; however, that is far from a true form line as 'BAR' could not have asked for a worse trip in the stretch. A little luck to get in, combined with a clean path through the race, should see him go very close this afternoon.

FUTURE HORSES TO WATCH

YOUR LORDSHIP

Trainer: Graham Motion

Last Race: May 30, 7th race

Finish: 1st by 2 3/4

It could be a fun 4-year-old summer on the turf for the Graham Motion-trained runner. Racing as a first-time gelding, Your Lordship rated long with plenty of confidence throughout, waited to pounce in the upper stretch, and angled and swept clear for the win.

BLO YOUR MIND

Trainer: Tim Keefe

Last Race: September 12, 3rd

Finish: 1st by 3 1/2 lengths

In a field full of first-time starters, this Blofeld filly proved best despite looking a bit green. She pushed the pace while three wide, took over into the stretch, and drew out despite failing to change leads.

LINETTE (Entered at Laurel – SAT 10/3, Race 10)

Trainer: Tim Woolley

Last Race: September 13, 1st

Finish: 2nd by head

First-time starter stumbled from in between horses when racing in tight on the backstretch, and that forced her rider right out of the irons for several strides. The filly stayed to task, however, as she angled widest into the stretch, and rallied gamely to drop a photo to a logical and favored winner.

PLENTY ON TAP (Entered at Laurel – SAT 10/3, Race 3)

Trainer: Tim Woolley

Last Race: Sept. 11, 5th

Finish: 3rd by 2 3/4 lengths

Didn't break the best, then raced three wide and in between rivals on the backstretch before being shuffled back, cut the corner into the stretch, then was over in behind horses for most of the stretch before rallying belatedly to just miss second.

NOAH CHANCE

Trainer: John Robb

Last Race: September 13, 6th

Finish: 5th by 1 1/2

Tracked the pace from in between horses, was bottled up turning into the stretch, and was stymied in behind horses; finally altered course to the outside and made up some late ground.

FIERCE AND STRONG

Trainer: Michael Salvaggio Jr.

Last Race: September 13, Race 6

Finish: 4th by 1

Last on the rail for most of the way, he was stuck in behind rivals for most of the stretch, had to alter course several times, and still kicked on with interest.

SCARLETT'S HALO

Trainer: Chad Brown

Last Race: September 19, 7th

Finish: 2nd by 3 1/2

Hung out to dry from the start of this one-turn mile, she raced extremely wide for most of the way and tried her best to finish second to the co-favorite. She's a big, strong filly capable on turf and dirt, and might appreciate stretching out around two turns for her next start.

RIVER TAY

Trainer: Bruce Brown

Last Race: September 19, 10th

Finish: 3rd by 1 1/4

Brushed the side of the gate at the start of this turf sprint; she then stayed inside for most of the way and was stuck in traffic throughout the long stretch. Showed some life once clear late in the game and can win going short or long.

AJAX THE GREAT

Trainer: Ollie Figgins III

Last Race: August 29, 3rd (Charles Town)

Finish: 6th by 21 3/4 lengths

Probably too early to give up on this 2-year-old half-brother to Kenny Had a Notion (stakes-winner sprinting on both turf and dirt), and the feeling is that this gelding will enjoy switching to turf for his next start. The workout on September 10 matches up with the barn's 4-year-old filly Hale Bop, who earned a 66 Beyer when fourth in a \$12,000 starter on Delaware turf six days later. Perhaps they breezed in company.

SIP OF MANHATTAN

Trainer: Eduardo Leiva

Last Race: Sept. 25; 6th

Finish: 2nd by 5

A bit wound up with pony during post parade, then a tad reluctant to load, but gave a top first-out effort as second-best to gate-wire winner Winslow.

SEA ISLE CITY

Trainer: Keri Brion

Last Race: Sept. 26, 8th

Finish: 3rd by 1 1/4

D J ABS

Trainer: Lindsay Schultz

Last Race: September 19, 8th

Finish: 2nd by 4 1/4

Juvenile filly has some turf pedigree, and she gave a strong try in her grass debut. Showed decent speed from the start, but had the misfortune to face a sharp, gate-to-wire winner. Stayed on strongly to the wire, and it looks like she's found a home on the green stuff.

GOLD SOVEREIGN

Trainer: Thomas Garner

Last Race: September 20, 3rd

Finish: 8th by 6 1/2

Likely purchased by his current connections for future races over hurdles, but this gelding showed decent turf form in longer-distance races in New York and had no chance in his local debut. Fell to his face at the start, then was wired in a paceless heat where they ran 1-2 around the track.

SUJO *(Breezed 3F - :36.20 at ELP on 9/25)*

Trainer: Greg Sacco

Last Race: Jan. 16, 7th race

Finish: 4th by 4 3/4 lengths

First-time starter was pinballed from in between horses at the start, and dropped all the way back to last. Started to kick in at the eighth pole, angled to the fence, and just missed getting third on the wire with a nice gallop-out.

OTAGO

Trainer: Lacey Gaudet

Last Race: Sept. 25, 8th

Finish: 3rd by 2 3/4

Raced 3 and 4 wide much of the way, then bid 4-5 wide with 5/16 to run, and fought to a narrow lead with one furlong to go. A very strong third first off the claim for Lacey Gaudet barn in a salty Ratings Optional Claiming group.

Held her inside position over the “good” going, dropped back a bit near upper stretch, then made some ground late to finish third in the Selima Stakes. May prefer firm turf, short or long.

JOCKEY CALLS

At Laurel Park, jockeys can be named on more than one horse on the original overnight.

Race 4: Jevian Toledo - #2 - Sin Sin; #6 - Military Grade >>> **Toledo rides MILITARY GRADE**

Race 5: Warren Ebow III - #1 - Box of Rockets; #2 - Paul's Guitar >>> **Ebow rides PAUL'S GUITAR**

Race 6: Jevian Toledo - #2 - Poor Jacqui; #9 - Alicegoneshopping >>> **Toledo rides POOR JACQUI**

Race 7 - Carlos Lopez - #6 - Daufuskie Island; #10 - Upsidedown Man >>> **Lopez rides UPSIDEDOWN MAN**

Race 7 - Jorge Ruiz - #2 - Katie's Notion; #7 - Derz Smart >>> **Ruiz rides KATIE'S NOTION**

THE ROUND-UP - by John Piassek, *The Racing Biz*

A recap of last week's action at Laurel Park. Visit theracingbiz.com for John Piassek's FREE full analysis of today's Laurel card.

Friday, Sept. 25

Race 1: Heavy rain earlier in the week knocked this race, and all of Friday's scheduled grass races, to the dirt. That suited **Day Made** just fine, as he quickly opened up a clear early lead and never looked back from there. Love Aficionado had little hope of catching up from there, but managed to close well from off the pace to get second.

Race 2: J C's Boys cleared to the lead and the rail and gave odds-on choice **Kalea Bay** all he could handle in a stretch duel. Ultimately, the latter worked his way to a half-length victory, with the top two 7 ¼ lengths clear of third.

Race 4: Spring Training broke a bit slowly, but rushed up the rail and took command. She opened up on the turn and drew off to an easy win. There was a line of three horses chasing her from off the rail; all of them stopped badly and finished more than 14 lengths back.

Race 5: Big Earn quickly overwhelmed Byway and opened up on the turn. **Celtic Harp**, who rode the rail off the pace in the early stages, angled to the center of the track in the stretch and wore down Big Earn in the final yards.

Race 6: Winslow opened up a clear early lead up the backstretch and was well in front at the top of the stretch. His strides shortened dramatically in the last eighth, and Xavier Perez had to get into him just to complete the last eighth in 13.53 seconds. However, no one made up much ground behind him, so his lead was safe.

Race 8: Next Level raced in the two-path off the early pace and was forced five-wide at the top of the lane. Lure Him In and Otago fought gamely from his inside, but Next Level wore them down in the final strides. This was the only two-turn race of the day, and the only race where all of the top three finishers raced off the rail.

Saturday, Sept. 26

Race 1: Penelope's Gift and Adios Marilyn battled each other for the lead. That set it up for the stretch rallies of **Meadowlark Drive** and first-time starter Divine Mousse. The former got up in the last sixteenth, giving Jorge Ruiz yet another winner on grass, while Divine Mousse secured a strong second on debut. Penelope's Gift finished third, 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ lengths clear of her sparring partner.

Race 2: The early leaders completely fell apart, which set it up for **Mugatu** to swoop the group and draw off to an easy victory.

Race 3: Dynacito secured the early lead on the rail, then allowed an aggressive Davyjonz to make a three-wide brush for the top spot and secure command. On the far turn, Dynacito rerallied two-wide and took the lead back, then fended off Orator's steady challenge for a determined win. Hanksdiviningrod closed steadily from last to complete the trifecta.

Race 5: The well-bet first-time starter **Alborz** lived up to expectations with an impressive maiden-breaking score. He raced towards the back of the pack behind slow early fractions, and looked to have tons of horse at the top of the stretch. Once he found clear sailing, Jorge Ruiz set him down, and he worked his way to the front. Early leader Stars on the Water rerallied and got up for second over The Wrath of David.

Race 6: Angel Cruz gave **Mischief in Motion** a heads-up ride in the All Along Stakes. He put her on the lead, set moderate fractions, and held on for a 25-1 upset win. Awesome Czech and Grayosh both closed with great interest, but couldn't overcome the slow pace and finished second and third, respectively.

Race 8: After breaking her maiden on dirt last out, **Hidden Overture** proved she has equal aptitude on grass with a Selima Stakes win. She made a four-wide move after the lead on the turn and took command, holding on despite racing erratically in the stretch.

Race 9: Coast Highway and Broadcast were next-to-last and last on the far turn, but they both rallied wide on the turn and moved to engage the early leaders. It was a chaotic stretch run, with plenty of bumping, but Coast Highway wore his way past everyone to win the Laurel Futurity, with Broadcast second. Fullcup set the early pace and held on to cross the wire third, but was disqualified for bumping Howard's Hope and causing him to fall (both the horse and jockey Jose Lezcano avoided major injury).

Sunday, Sept. 27

Race 5: Bangkok Blaze and Whacky Witch duelled for the early lead and exhausted each other. That set it up for **Silver Strings**, who moved three-wide at the top of the stretch and drew off to win as much the best.

Race 7: Barbados Buzz was an impressive maiden winner on grass last out. Even though this race was washed off the lawn, he proved he can handle the slop just fine. He rated off the pace in the center of the track and kicked past early leader Laysen at the top of the stretch, drawing away for a dominant 8 ½-length score. It wouldn't be surprising to see him in stakes company down the road. Laysen held off the others and finished second by a nose.

Race 8: Tenth time proved the charm for odds-on favorite **Kiss Me Mo**, who overhauled pacesetting Rocker Roller and drew off in the stretch. Rocker Roller gave the eventual winner a decent fight before fading in the last eighth, and still managed to finish a clear-cut second.

PAST TRACK TRENDS

Apr. 3 – Fair
Apr. 4 – Fair
Apr. 10 – Fair
Apr. 11 – Fair
Apr. 12 – Fair
Apr. 17 – Fair
Apr. 18 – SPEED BIAS
Apr. 19 – Fair
Apr. 24 – Fair
Apr. 25 – SPEED BIAS
Apr. 26 – Fair
May 1 – SPEED BIAS

May 2 – Fair
May 3 – Fair
May 8 – CLOSERS BIAS
May 9 – Fair
May 10 – CLOSERS BIAS
May 14 – Fair
🏆 May 15 – Fair
🏆 May 16 – Fair
May 22 – SPEED BIAS
May 23 – Fair
May 29 – SPEED BIAS

May 30 – Fair
May 31 – Fair
June 5 – SPEED BIAS
June 6 – CLOSERS BIAS
June 7 – Fair
June 12 – Fair
June 13 – Fair
June 14 – SPEED BIAS
June 19 – Fair
June 20 – Fair
June 21 – Fair
June 26 – Fair

June 27 – Fair
June 28 – INSIDE SPEED BIAS
Sep. 11 – INSIDE BIAS
Sep. 12 – SPEED BIAS
Sep. 13 – Fair
Sep. 18 – Fair
Sep. 19 – Fair
Sep. 20 – Fair
Sep. 25 – Fair
Sep. 26 – Fair
Sep. 27 – Fair