



LAUREL PARK

HANDICAPPING GUIDE for FRIDAY, OCT. 23

TODAY'S SELECTIONS FROM THE LAUREL PARK TEAM



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DAVE RODMAN



TIM TULLOCK

RACE 1:	5-9-8-2	5-11-12-1	2-8-11-7	5-12-7-9	8-4-1-11	11-9-8-5
RACE 2:	3-2-1-5	3-2-5-1	1A-2-4-6	1A-6-2-5	2-1A-5-3	1-4-2-3
RACE 3:	9-1-6-2	5-6-9-8	9-6-5-8	6-5-9-8	6-9-5-1	9-6-5-2
RACE 4:	5-6-2-1	6-7-2-5	1-6-4-5	6-5-4-2	5-2-6-3	5-6-1-2
RACE 5:	8-1-4-2	4-5-2-1	1-11-4-8	11-4-6-14	6-4-1-7	12-4-6-1
RACE 6:	8-9-2-5	5-8-6-2	8-6-2-5	8-6-1-9	9-8-7-2	2-8-1-6
RACE 7:	4-5-7-6	4-7-5-6	8-1-3-6	6-5-1-9	1-5-2-7	3-4-5-7
RACE 8:	9-8-2-1	2-8-1-9	8-3-7-2	8-2-3-1	9-5-8-3	9-2-8-7
RACE 9:	3-10-7-13	14-10-5-7	5-10-3-12	10-7-5-2	7-3-12-10	10-7-3-6

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. TAX AND TAGS

2. DERZ SMART

3. RARE ECLIPSE

The first post time is 12 pm, and there are two "Value Pick 5" wagers, each with a LOW 12% takeout rate. **TAX AND TAGS** has improved by leaps and bounds with blinkers, and he earned a respectable Beyer Speed Figure when graduating three weeks ago. Dueled outside the 83-1 last-finisher through a quick opening quarter, then stayed strong despite hopping back to his left lead on the wire. Should show speed again for a barn that went 5 for the last 16 (31%, \$3.06 ROI) with last-out maiden winners. **DERZ SMART** was wired by an odds-winner. Saved ground behind the leader, angled to split rivals three wide, then gained ground while remaining on his left lead. Finished ahead of three of these, and figures to be rallying strongly once again. **RARE ECLIPSE** sat a nice pocket trip, stayed covered up until midstretch, eased outside, and surged home despite changing back to his left lead. The fourth-finisher then placed in a \$16,000 maiden claimer with a 63 Beyer. He sold for \$14,000 at public auction after that race, and will attempt to rally from the outside this time. The barn went 6 for the last 23 (26%, \$8.42 ROI) in the first start following a trainer switch. **FUNKY SEE FUNKY DO** cuts back in distance, and would benefit from a swift pace up front.

>> RACE 2

1. DIVINE CHILD

2. NO MORE CALLS

3. CHOWSER

DIVINE CHILD pressed the odds-on runner-up from the outside, battled with that foe on the turn, and tired from his early efforts. This extra distance is a question mark, but he did a good amount of the dirty pace work last time and has enough tactical speed to stay close to today's expected moderate pace. Rodriguez departs for Lookin At Mac. **NO MORE CALLS** didn't have an easy trip last month. Bobbled slightly at the start, then was rank pulling his way forward to track a moderate pace from the pocket. He was bumped onto his right lead entering the turn when in tight on the rail, eased three wide, and finished in a one-paced manner. The runner-up, a five-time winner, then placed in a first-level allowance with an 80 Beyer. Drops into this strict "non-three" starter, but could use a bit of pace help. Lopez departs for **CHOWSER**, who was wired by an odds-on winner (four-time winner) in a slow-paced race eight days ago. Expect him to get a good deal closer to the lead for a barn that went 2 for the last 10 (20%, \$3.22 ROI) in the second after the claim. **LOOKIN AT MAC** was wired by the favorite at Parx. Stretches out in distance with enough speed to get up and on the pace for a barn that went 9 for the last 21 (43%, \$2.50 ROI) when returning from 6-10 day layoffs.

>> RACE 3

1. LUX

2. GRANITE HALL

3. CHARLIBU

LUX worked out a pretty good trip when finishing ahead of three of today's rivals. Sat a loose pocket behind a pacesetting winner, eased outside into the stretch, then held second on the wire. Expect her to work out another pace-tracking trip here for a barn that sent out a turf winner at Meadowlands last month. **GRANITE HALL** has excuses for both starts. Broke slowly in her debut, raced in behind rivals on the turn, altered course through traffic in the stretch, and just missed. Off a beat slow last time, she raced in midpack behind a quick pace, saved ground into the stretch, eased out for racing room in the upper stretch, and gamed almost five lengths despite not seeming to love that wet course. **CHARLIBU** showed promise on debut behind the top-two picks. She stumbled and was then bumped hard leaving the gate, cut the corner into the stretch, and ran on late despite flopping back to her left lead

right on the wire. This barn went 10 for the last 27 (37%, \$2.04 ROI) with second-out maidens.

>> RACE 4

1. ICE SHOT

2. ORB ALPHA

3. RED SPITFIRE

ICE SHOT, listed as a Belmont vet scratch (sick) on 10/10, broke a beat slow and was bumped, tracked a slow pace while four wide at the back of a compact field, pushed the pace while five wide after a half, made a three-wide bid on the turn under urging, then failed to change leads. The runner-up, a five-time winner, next placed in a first-level allowance with an 80 Beyer. Double-drops into this conditioned claimer and should produce a late bid. Rosario lands here instead of Bad Boy Butch. **ORB ALPHA**, listed as a Colonial vet scratch on 7/5, returns from a nine-month layoff after losing the rider at Gulfstream. Pulled off a big upset two back after working out a perfect closer's trip. The third-finisher then took an \$8,000 "beaten" claimer there with a 63 Beyer. **RED SPITFIRE**, the lone three-time winner in the field, found an excellent position tracking a pace skirmish, pushed the pace three wide, was urged along, and failed to threaten. Seems well-entered at this class level for a barn that went 3 for the last 10 (30%, \$2.66 ROI) with experienced horses that are routing for the first time. EDELWEISS deserves a long look as the projected controlling speed. Pressed the pace three wide in the early stages last time, took over the lead at the seven-sixteenths, and tired in the stretch. Likely won't have to work nearly as hard to get forward here.

>> RACE 5

1. PLENTY ON TAP

2. TYRUS

3. GORDITO

PLENTY ON TAP did not have an easy trip on turf two back. Broke slow, advanced to stalk three-to-two wide, stalked three wide and in between on the backstretch, dropped inside turning for home, and was stuck in traffic in the upper stretch, altered out to split horses, and rallied nicely with an okay gallop-out. Faced two next-out dirt winners that day, and he returned to run well on dirt in an off-turf race 20 days ago. **TYRUS** deserves a look after solid efforts in his last two turf tries. Seemed a bit green back at Monmouth over the summer, as he lugged in through the stretch drive while rallying into third. **GORDITO** makes his third start of the form cycle after finishing just behind the top pick last month. The late-runner could use some pace and trip luck. QUAMASH placed just behind the favorite at Meadowlands, and looks like the main pacesetter. MUSTBETHEMUNNING drops in class after being wired for \$40,000 at Monmouth. The third-finisher then graduated in a dime maiden claimer at Meadowlands with a 54 Beyer.

>> RACE 6

1. KING PUCK

2. TETHERED SOUL

3. GOOD WILLIE

KING PUCK was bought back for \$6,000 earlier this month at the Fasig-Tipton digital sale, and he now switches surfaces out of a half-sister to Grade 1-winning dirt router Vicar, Grade 3-placed dirt router Mama Dean, and three other blacktype earners on dirt. Takes a big drop in class, and the 10/18 bullet work matches the barn's 4-year-old On the Level (84 dirt Beyer). Perhaps they breezed in company for a barn that went 3 for 11 (27%, \$7.06 ROI) between 10/4 and 10/17. **TETHERED SOUL** might not have cared for that two-turn configuration at Timonium, but he ran a good second in his previous dirt sprint at Penn National. Think he'll get close to the pace for a barn that went 8 for 25 (32%, \$3.02 ROI) between 9/13 and 10/18. **GOOD WILLIE** tried to rally into a slow pace when facing two next-out winners (Chappelle repeated in a nickel "beaten" claimer at Delaware with a 72 Beyer). This barn sent out a 9-2

winner here on 10/15. **UNCLE GREY** faced two next-out winners when wired in a slow-paced race by Veneto, who then took a \$7,500 "beaten" claimer with a 61 Beyer. Should get a bit more pace to attack here.

>> RACE 7

1. GALLANT LAD

2. CHALK TALK

3. TARGET MARKET

GALLANT LAD did not have a good trip in his most recent turf appearance. Broke a beat slow at Gulfstream that day, stalked a slow pace from the outside, raced over in behind horses for most of the stretch, and still made up several lengths. The winner of that heat then placed in a restricted first-level allowance there with an 84 Beyer. Kicks late for a barn that went 2 for the last 10 (20%, \$2.32 ROI) with horses going second after layoffs between 180 and 365 days. **CHALK TALK** sat the pocket on turf behind a quick pace two back, altered course back up the fence in the upper stretch, then rallied for second behind the odds-on winner despite hopping back to his left lead. The fifth-finisher then won a \$16,000 maiden claimer at Colonial with a 69 Beyer. He can get close to the pace. **TARGET MARKET** broke inward slightly, sat the pocket behind a quick pace, saved ground in midpack after a half-mile, split rivals on the second turn, eased three deep, then finished evenly. The runner-up then won a \$40,000 maiden claimer at Colonial with a 79 Beyer. This barn went 7 for the last 28 (25%, \$2.53 ROI) with third-out maidens. **LIVE LIKE JEFF** (\$20,000 RNA yearling) is out of multiple stakes-winning miler Solo Rolo (87 wet-dirt Beyer).

>> RACE 8

1. MY HOMETOWN GAL

2. U BETTER KISS ME

3. WITCHY VIBES

MY HOMETOWN GAL prompted the 3-2 runner-up at Delaware, pressed that foe in earnest under fairly confident handling on the second turn, then tired in the final furlong. Expect early speed for a barn that went 3 for the last 14 (21%, \$2.84 ROI) with second-time routers on dirt. **U BETTER KISS ME** might have raced on the best part of the Delaware track when rallying very wide to score over wet going nine days ago. Tries two turns for a trainer-jockey combination that sent out a 17-1 dirt-route winner at Delaware on 10/17, and is a half-sister to a stake-placed dirt miler. **WITCHY VIBES** tried stakes foes in her last three races, and she finished behind the top pick last time out at Delaware. Perhaps she didn't care for the muddy conditions that day, and she can work out a tracking trip after breaking from the inside. **SOUPER ATHLETE** might have aimed a bit high against males when finishing behind the three favorites in her second lifetime start. Expect a late kick.

>> RACE 9

1. EACHPEACHPEARPLUM

2. DREAM OVERTURE

3. CAROLINA SUN

EACHPEACHPEARPLUM needs only one scratch in order to participate, and she exits a solid performance over yielding ground at Delaware. Set the pace from the rail, tried to sprint home through a quick third-quarter split, and was just kicked down. The stamina has been lacking recently, but she has enough speed to find a good position without losing too much ground entering the first turn. **DREAM OVERTURE** received an excellent ride and trip when scoring less than two weeks ago. Sat the pocket behind a solid pace, split rivals late on the second turn, then drew clear. That tactical speed should serve her well for a barn that went 4 for the last 13 (31%, \$2.18 ROI) with last-out winners. **CAROLINA SUN** broke a beat slow, stalked outside at the back in a race without much pace, swung widest into the stretch, then rallied for third despite being late to change leads. Must prove her mettle around two turns, but should receive a stronger race flow. Keep an eye on **KOBE'S HOPE**, who brings dirtied-up form into the race. Likely needed one when returning from a

288-day layoff two back, then showed speed on muddy dirt. Back to her preferred surface, she'll likely revert to the closing tactics that worked well for her last year.

MACK'S FACTS – by Mackenzie Pfeiffer

R1: Airbrush draw inside with the sneaky ground saving Boyce aboard, a setup that worked for the maiden win 2-back. Listed at 10-1 ML, getting back to a firm turf course may benefit him at a price.

R2: Geostoblame looked to appreciate the change in company after his digital sale purchase in August, winning first time out for the new connections. Now making his second start off the bench, he looks to benefit from an honest pace in the group.

R3: Charlibu had a bit too much work to do on debut after a troubled start. She showed interest and effort, now landing outside she may find a tidier trip.

R4: Biz Whiz looks to appreciate the added ground in his two recent turf tries. Troubled trips on the main track while sprinting may have muddied his form but he looks to sit a comfortable inside trip stalking the pace here.

R5: Mustbethemunning looks the obvious player here, significant class relief and 2nd off the bench should benefit him greatly. Colonial Knight could be a value in the exotics, out of a Colonel John Mare who ran her career best on the turf, he now tries routing for the second time.

R6: Tethered Soul looks to appreciate the recent class relief based on his result 2-back. If you're willing to forgive the last outing when he found himself going 2-turns, he looks to be the controlling speed here.

R7: In a race where I don't find myself head over heels with anyone in particular, Live Like Jeff may offer an upset on debut. Out of a multiple stakes winning turf router, he looks to be well prepared for the debut. To top it all off, the barn sent out an upset debut runner just last weekend.

R8: An interesting group of 2 y/o fillies who look to have stepped into deep waters and now find themselves working through conditions here. I lean towards the late running U Better Kiss Me, the only 2x winner in this group, and one who arrives with confidence from her win last out.

R9: While Carolina Sun looks to have plenty of chances to have notched her third career win, she has only tried this distance once before. After a wide trip in stakes company last out, the stretch out may serve her well for a big price to end the day.

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TODAY'S HOT TRAINER STATS

RACE 1

#5 - Tax and Tags

Trainer: John Salzman Jr.

Last-Out Maiden Winner: 5 for 16 (31%, \$3.06 ROI)

RACE 1

#12 - Rare Eclipse

Trainer: Gina Perri

First After Trainer Switch: 6 for 23 (26%, \$8.42 ROI)

RACE 2

#1 - Lookin at Mac

Trainer: Jamie Ness

First After 6-10 Days: 9 for 21 (43%, \$2.50 ROI)

RACE 2

#5 - Chowser

Trainer: Troy Singh

Second After Claim: 2 for 10 (20%, \$3.22 ROI)

RACE 3

#9 - Charlibu

Trainer: Brittany Russell

Maidens, Second Start: 10 for 27 (37%, \$2.04 ROI)

RACE 4

#2 - Red Spitfire

Trainer: Phil Capuano

Experienced Horses, First Route: 3 for 10 (30%, \$2.66 ROI)

RACE 6

#5 - King Puck

Trainer: Keri Brion

Between 10/4 and 10/17: 3 for 11 (27%, \$7.06 ROI)

RACE 6

#8 - Tethered Soul

Trainer: Hugh McMahon

Between 9/13 and 10/18: 8 for 25 (32%, \$3.02 ROI)

RACE 7

#4 - Gallant Lad

Trainer: Michael Matz

Second After 180-365 Days: 2 for 10 (20%, \$2.32 ROI)

RACE 7

#5 - Target Market

Trainer: Jorge Duarte Jr.

Maidens, Third Start: 7 for 28 (25%, \$2.53 ROI)

RACE 8

#2 - My Hometown Gal

Trainer: Michael Gorham

Second Route, Dirt: 3 for 14 (21%, \$2.84 ROI)

RACE 9

10 - Dream Overture

Trainer: Robbie Bailes

Last-Out Winner: 4 for 13 (31%, \$2.18 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: Claiming 16k, 3YO+, 5 ½ Furlongs, Turf			
Horse	Race	Trip	Notes
#9 HOPPETOSSE	Claiming 16k, LRL, 5 1/2F, Good Turf, 10/02/26 – 2 nd	Chased even pace from 3L back to the turn; dropped to rail and advanced to stalk in the pocket rounding into the stretch; briefly thought about splitting foes in upper stretch but instead cut back inside; rival then came down and closed the rail gap, forcing him to wait at a pivotal moment; found room again inside the final furlong and then stayed on willingly for 2 nd but the winner had already flown.	Although he never checked, having to wait on the rail in mid-stretch did cost him momentum while also allowing the eventual winner to open up an unassailable lead; not sure he'd have won with a better stretch run, but he would have gone close and more might be expected of him today. Note: his two-back effort deserves a small pace upgrade.
Other notes: - After chasing the even pace and then swinging a little wider-than-ideal into the lane, #1 RAGS TO LACE finished really well over a flat 5F last time; today's 5 1/2F trip (which he tries on the grass for the first time) might help unlock a little more improvement; respected. - Cut back to 5F, #10 ROYAL RENEGADE finished very well into just an even pace at Delaware last time; today's extra 1/16 should help him step forward on that effort, especially if the pace is stronger. - Similar to both of the above, following a game staying on 2nd over a flat 5F last time, #11 DERZ SMART should appreciate today's extra 1/16.			
Race 2: OC25k/SAL20k, 3YO+, 1 1/16 Miles, Dirt			
Other notes: - Given his three career wins have come via a deep closing trip, the slow pace in #2 NO MORE CALLS' last race (25.44, 50.04) surely didn't see him to best effect; he also failed to settle early which didn't help. - Returned to dirt at 7F last time, #1 LOOKIN AT MAC ran in a manner to suggest he'll appreciate the return to two-turns today. - #1A GEOSTOBLAME popped the gate prior to winning his barn debut for Ness off the layoff last time; he's eligible to improve on that effort. - #5 CHOWSER failed to stay while wide and out of cover at Delaware last time.			
Race 3: MSW, 3-6YO (F), 5 ½ Furlongs, Turf			
Horse	Race	Trip	Note
#9 CHARLIBU	MSW, LRL, 5 1/2F, Good Turf, 09/18/26 – 4 th	Stumbled, bumped hard start; away slowly in last; chased honest pace from ~10L back in a detached last to the turn; responded when nudged along turn and took slightly closer order; cut corner into lane, then stayed on well between foes inside for 4 th but had too much to do; nearest finish.	While conceding experience to everyone in this race as the only debutant, she lost all chance at the start and a much improved effort can be expected second out; player.
Other notes: - #8 MAD MISTY didn't quite offer enough of a late punch to earn an upgrade last time; however, she was boxed in and prevented from advancing or building momentum from the 5/16 to the 1/8 pole which mightn't have helped her chances; she has a game attitude and is entitled to respect today.			

Race 4: Claiming 12.5k, 3YO+, 1 1/16 Miles, Dirt**Other notes:**

- **#3 MAUPANSANT** once again became very fractious prior to the start of his last race.
- **#6 ICE SHOT** didn't quite do enough to earn an upgrade last out; however, he also wasn't helped by the fact that he was bumped, pinched and steadied at the start which left him in last early; he then used energy to regain a prominent position early before being caught a little wide on the turn, too; so, there are reasons as to why he may be able to offer more today. Note: he received a favorable pace setup when winning at Penn National two-back.

Race 5: Maiden Claiming 16k, 3-6YO, 1 1/8 Miles, Turf

Horse	Race	Trip	Note
#1 MUSTBETHEMUNNING	Maiden Claiming 40k, MTH, 1 1/16M, Firm Turf, 09/12/26 – 2 nd	Hit gate; chased even pace from ~6L back on the rail in third racing to the far turn; came under pressure and responded approaching the ¼ pole, then tried to muscle his way between foes but was bumped numerous times and then steadied back a little in upper stretch; regrouped and regathered stride after straightening when in 4 th , then re-rallied into 2 nd through the stretch.	His trouble in upper stretch didn't cost him the race (winner was a mile the best), but he was a clearer second best than the margin suggests and he can likely offer more today (something closer to his two-back effort) with a clean trip.
#4 PLENTY ON TAP	Maiden Claiming 16k, LRL, 1M, Good Turf, 09/11/26 – 3 rd	Step slow start; chased honest pace from ~5-6L back 3W rounding the first turn, then took a strong hold and dragged his rider a little closer racing to the far turn; continued pulling while tight between foes rounding the far turn, then worked inside and cut the corner into the lane; lacked room shortly after straightening and had to steady on the leader's heels; dropped back a couple of lengths ~1/16 pole, then found room again and ran on strongly but had too much to do.	His last start on turf, two-back, prior to a game runner-up effort on dirt last time: The way he traveled into the race and then picked back up inside the final 1/16 to just miss 2nd left the impression that with a clean trip, he'd near enough have won this race; player.

Other notes:

- Although the chart comment notes that **#5 TYRUS** steadied near the wire last time, it was negligible and made no difference to the result or margin of defeat.

Race 6: Claiming 7.5k, 3YO+, 6 Furlongs, Dirt**Other notes:**

- While accepting that **#1 SPURIOUS** did lose ground racing ridiculously wide on the turn at Delaware last time, we should also note that he was massively aided by the hot pace (21.89, 46.60) collapsing in the lane.
- Although we can't use it in any way as a sole excuse for his defeat, **#3 YES CHEF** was prominently positioned early while racing over a closer biased racetrack last time which didn't help his chances. Note: he was also prominently positioned over a speed biased track when finishing second two-back.
- **#8 TETHERED SOUL** sat a wider-than-ideal trip at Timonium last time.
- Exiting the same race as #3 YES CHEF, **#9 WHO SAYS SO** was arguably aided by the track bias when staying on for 4th in that race.

Race 7: Maiden Claiming 35k, 3-6YO, 1 1/16 Miles, Turf

Horse	Race	Trip	Note
#4 GALLANT LAD	MSW, GP, 7 1/2F, Firm Turf, 03/12/26 – 4 th	Bumped, away step slow start; bumped between foes and steadied a fraction entering first turn; pulled hard under a tight hold between foes in the 2-3P ~4L off the lead back stretch; took closer order traveling well	His two-back effort and last on turf, prior to a layoff.

		approaching far turn; nudged along to hold position as pace lifted bend; in a little tight approaching the top of the lane and shuffled back to last, then carefully threaded his way between foes until properly in the clear ~1/16 pole; stayed on for 4 th ; nearest finish.	A messy trip in a slowly run race that featured a very tightly bunched field; this race did not see him to best effect, and he has to be respected second back today getting back on grass.
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Other Notes:

- **#1 AGENDUM** was arguably an unlucky loser at Delaware last time as he lost more ground racing 3-5W on the turn than the 1/2L he was beaten by; respected.
- **#3 SOUPER POWER TAPIT** didn't quite do enough to earn an upgrade last time; however, it should be noted that the slow pace led to the running order hardly changing up top which worked against him; whatever the case, it was a step forward and he finished with enough late interest to warrant consideration now stretching out.
- **#6 NAPISONMYAGENDA** took advantage of a speed bias when finishing 2nd two back; blinkers on today.

Race 8: OC62k/N2X Allowance, 2YO (F), 1 Mile, Dirt

Horse	Race	Trip	Note
#8 U BETTER KISS ME	Starter Allowance, DEL, 6F, Wet Fast Dirt, 10/14/26 – 1 st	Slow into stride; chased even pace from ~8-9L back under strong encouragement racing into and around the turn while wide; came 9W into the lane when still well behind in a detached last, then rallied with tremendous enthusiasm and strong strides past everyone to win easily, going away.	This was a visually impressive performance, especially as she lost ground racing very wide on the turn and only had an even pace to run at; she left the impression that she has much more to offer and should relish today's step up in trip and long stretch.

Other notes:

- **#9 HIDDEN RHYTHM** drew off to score very easily at Delaware last time and was not aggressively ridden through the lane; she surely has more to offer. Note: she had a slightly troubled trip on debut.

Race 9: Claiming 16k, 3YO+ (F), 1 Mile, Turf

Other notes:

- In her last flat turf start at Penn National in August, **#4 V INSPIRED** finished very strongly with blinkers off; she could be seen to good effect today getting back to the level with pace to run at.
- With Lasix removed, **#5 CAROLINA SUN** ran a very nice race sprinting at Colonial last time, staying on well late having raced in last of five behind some slow fractions early; interesting that following that improved effort Lasix stay off today (according to the early overnight) stretching out.
- **#6 FAHNEE** was involved in a hot pace (22.22, 44.91) that ended up collapsing when last seen sprinting; we can be somewhat forgiving of her defeat there; stretches out today.
- There was no visible reason as to why **#9 LADY EMBRACE** underperformed last time, but she never traveled with any zest and was done early; needs to bounce back.
- **#14 EACHPEACHPEARPLUM** ran another winning race in defeat last time but maybe wasn't helped by again meeting a wet turf course (the sixth time it's happened in her last seven turf starts); contender if drawing in.

Horses to Follow

R1: HOPPETOSSE (10/1 ML)

HOPPETOSSE has gone close a number of times recently despite less than perfect trips; he now wheels back facing familiar foes he's proven himself against with the bug weight off, which, combined with a clean trip, could make him very live at 10/1 on the ML.

R5: PLENTY ON TAP (9/2 ML)

Dropped back into MC16k company, PLENTY ON TAP really should have won his last turf start two-back, but a difficult trip left him with his maiden tag intact; facing a slightly softer group than he has done recently, he can be given one more chance at 9/2 ML odds following a fine effort in an off-turf event three weeks ago.

FUTURE HORSES TO WATCH

YOUR LORDSHIP

Trainer: Graham Motion

Last Race: May 30, 7th race

Finish: 1st by 2 3/4

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.

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

PLENTY ON TAP

Trainer: Tim Woolley

Last Race: Oct. 3, 3rd

Finish: 2nd by 2

Didn't break the best two back on turf, then raced three wide and in between rivals on the backstretch before being shuffled back. Cut the corner, then was over in behind horses for most of the stretch before rallying belatedly to just miss second. Ran well when washed off the green on 10/3, and deserves another shot on turf.

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.

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

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.

INTREPID'S LEGACY

Trainer: Gary Capuano

Last Race: Oct. 10; 10th

Finish: 2nd by 1/2

This is a huge horse that likely needed a race in his first start off a July layoff. Rushed up with a wide bid on the turn before being rebuffed by the even-money favorite.

KWAN

Trainer: Michael Simone

Last Race: October 18, 2nd race

Finish: 2nd by 1 3/4

Expected to be among the pacesetters when the beaten favorite, he instead broke poorly and was last in the early stages. Made a strong wide move through the turn and into the stretch, and tried hard all the way to the wire. Juvenile filly fits well sprinting on dirt at the \$25,000 starter allowance level.

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 4F - :48.40 at ELP on 10/19)*

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.

SEA ISLE CITY

Trainer: Keri Brion

Last Race: Sept. 26, 8th

Finish: 3rd by 1 1/4

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.

NIAL AND PRAY

Trainer: Joseph Murphy

Last Race: Oct. 10; 6th

Finish: 2nd by head

Broke from the inside for the second consecutive race, then wound up a very wide rally through the turn and into the stretch. Seemed a bit more professional than in his previous start, and was just outkicked by a 3-1 debuter.

PLENTYOF ROGUE

Trainer: Justin Nixon

Last Race: October 16, 2nd race

Finish: 2nd by 2 1/4 lengths

Caught a quality field of maidens for his debut, took some dirt in his face while saving ground, then kept on grinding to finish second behind a well-meant Repole/Russell first-time starter. Likely gained a ton of fitness from this effort.

JOCKEY CALLS

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

Race 2: Carlos Lopez: #2 - No More Calls; #5 - Chowser >>> **Lopez rides CHOWSER**

Race 2 - Jaime Rodriguez: #1/1A - Coupled Entry; #3 - Divine Child >>> **Rodriguez rides one of the entymates**

Race 4 - Emanuel Rosario: #4 - Bad Boy Butch; #6 - Ice Shot >>> **Rosario rides ICE SHOT**

Race 5 - Martin Chuan: #6 - Seawise; #9 - Moonlit Frost >>> **Chuan rides MOONLIT FROST**

Race 9 - Jaime Rodriguez: #3 - Sonic Sass; #11 - Scarlet's Dream >>> **Rodriguez rides SCARLET'S DREAM**

Race 9 - Taylor Kingsley: #4 - V Inspired; #9 - Lady Embrace >>> **Kingsley rides LADY EMBRACE**

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.

Thursday, Oct. 15

Race 1: Diane Lee worked out a perfect trip pressing longshot leader Dale's Bluff in the two-path. That rival dropped anchor at the top of the stretch, and Diane Lee held sway from there. 1-5 favorite Gripen had no kick even when she got clear sailing and managed no better than second.

Race 2: 3-5 favorite Righteous Dip made a strong, wide brush up the backstretch, and when he stuck a half-length in front on the final turn, it looked like he'd win by as much as he wanted. However, **Dolce Far Niente**, who set the pace on the rail, had something to say about that. He repelled that rival and left him in the dust for a sharp 7 ¼-length victory.

Race 4: Mr. Squeaky Wheels won the battle and the war. He dueled for the early lead with Sheriff Ronnie in the two-path, shook off that rival at the top of the stretch, and held clear of th others. Backnthewoods never left the rail and got up for second by the barest of noses over Sheriff Ronnie.

Race 5: Getting Closer took advantage of a perfect stalking trip and drew away from the rest in the stretch. There were five of them across the track in the final sixteenth; C C Commander overcame a poor start and surged to get second in the final strides.

Race 6: How often do you get 5-1 on a Graham Motion-trained and Jorge Ruiz-ridden runner? That dream came true with **Sewanee Inn**, who easily made the front on the far turn and opened up without being asked for her best. Always Ours ran the best race of the three first-time starters. She broke slowly and raced in last early on, but closed well in the stretch, only to level off a bit late and end up second to Jesse Marie.

Race 8: This one was a thriller, with three of them in serious contention in the stretch. Assume Nothing dug in gamely along the rail, and favored Shaft's Bullet loomed in the three-path. However, **Hittheroadjak**, who raced between those two, went the best of all, and pulled clear late after setting the pace. Assume Nothing managed to hold second in a very determined performance.

Friday, Oct. 16

Race 1: Imperial Chatter pressed the pace on the rail while **Ready Set** rated and waited in the two-path. When Imperial Chatter began to tire on the turn, Ready Set took advantage, drawing off to win by the length of the stretch. Thompson Falls rallied impressively and pulled well clear of the rest for second, though never a match for the winner.

Race 2: Card Shark, the only one in this five-horse field with experience, set the pace on the rail as the even-money favorite. Well-meant first-time starter **Frustrated** wore him down in the stretch, giving Brittany Russell and Sheldon Russell both halves of the early double.

Race 4: Another day, another Graham Motion-trained 2-year-old winning at an overlaid price. Do the Right Thing pressed early leader Bet Me and opened up in the last eighth at 9-1. Firster Boston Grey went off as the slight 2-1 favorite and closed with a rush, just missing second behind Bet Me.

Race 5: Veneto set the pace and opened up on the turn, then managed to dig in and hold on when Poor Peanut drew alongside him in the stretch.

Saturday, Oct. 17

Race 1: Arnaud Delacour trainee Dr. Brower was well-bet at first asking, going off as the 9-5 favorite. He ran credibly, leading most of the way before getting reeled in by **Patuxent** in the shadow of the wire.

Race 2: Sometime improved to 2-for-2 on the meet with a determined front-end victory. He dueled for the early lead with Lil Sebastian, and sent that rival into a 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ -length defeat. Sometime, meanwhile, had plenty more to give. He kicked on in the stretch and won easily, while Fayes Heart and Hell Ofa Hillbilly, who finished behind Sometime last out, chased and finished second and third, respectively.

Race 3: Oval Office and Seismic Surge looked like much the best on paper and ran like it. The former, a first-time starter sent off as the 6-5 favorite, stalked Seismic Surge in the two-path. Although Seismic Surge tried to fight back, Oval Office took command for good at the top of the stretch and drew away, giving Brittany Russell her second win with a first-time starter in as many days. Seismic Surge managed to hold second under vigorous urging, as Big Lar rallied to complete the trifecta.

Race 4: Ready for Magic raced covered up off the pace on the inside in the early stages. Once she got clear sailing, she kicked past one of the early duelers, Share Success, for the mild 5-1 upset. That one ran the best race of the three early leaders. She raced three-wide on the pace and finished a clear-cut second, while the other two pacesetters finished up the track.

Race 7: Mo Lake Time had plenty of pent-up early power, opening up by four lengths on the first turn. Jose Vargas wrangled her back a bit and slowed things down, which enabled her to open up again on the final turn and hold off the late rally of Tejanita. Those two were the only ones who really showed up; the rest of the field finished at least 22 lengths behind.

Race 8: It was a fortunate break for anyone who bet **Bruno**, and a tough one for anyone who supported Forrest City. The latter took control on the far turn, and while Bruno chased admirably in the lane, it looked like Forrest City would hold sway. However, in the final sixteenth, Forrest City's strides began to shorten, and Bruno got up to win by a neck.

Race 9: Roadrunner the Cat and Ballycurrin battled with each other for most of the way, and left an inviting opening towards the inside at the top of the stretch. **Chilly Girl** rallied through it for the victory. 3-10 favorite Horsing Around never fired and ended up a well-beaten fifth.

Sunday, Oct. 18

Race 2: Tiz Candy raced just off the pace in the two-path and managed to outkick favored Kwan, who was forced four-wide on the turn, by 1 ¾ lengths. With a more ground-saving trip, Kwan might've gotten there.

Race 3: Change My World never left the rail, and that proved the winning move. He surged up the inside late and got up over favored Creed's Vision in a 17-1 upset.

Race 4: Momma Oma, the only first-time starter in the seven-horse field, looked like she was in trouble when she fell far behind in the early stages. However, she closed with a rush in the center of the track for an exciting last-to-first victory.

Race 7: Skillian made waves when he broke his maiden in impressive fashion here last November. In his first start on this track since then, he got back to his best self, rallying from off a hot pace to win going away. He's bound to make an impact in Maryland/Virginia-restricted stakes this fall and winter.

Race 9: The ever-classy **Alani** struggled in her first start off a six-month layoff in her previous race, but bounced back here with a gate-to-wire win against a tough bunch. Kilo Road outkicked the rest to get second in a blanket finish.

PAST TRACK TRENDS

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

Oct. 2 – CLOSERS BIAS

Oct. 3 – Fair (Slight Inside Lean)

Oct. 4 – CLOSERS BIAS

Oct. 9 – SPEED BIAS

Oct. 10 - Fair

Oct. 16 – SPEED BIAS

Oct. 17 – Fair

Oct. 18 – Fair

