



LAUREL PARK HANDICAPPING GUIDE for Sunday, Feb. 22

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

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TODAY'S SELECTIONS FROM THE TMJC TEAM



KEITH FEUSTLE



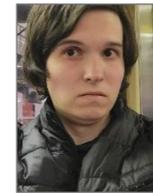
KALI FRANCOIS



DAN ILLMAN



MACK PFEIFFER



JOHN PIASSEK



DAVE RODMAN



TIM TULLOCK

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

TODAY'S ANALYSIS - by Dan Illman

>> RACE 1

1. ARMED N DANGEROUS

2. TUFF LUCK

3. SUMMER VIBES

First post is NOON, with a LOW 12% takeout on "Value" Pick 5 wagers (first five races; last five races). Curious to see what we get from **ARMED N DANGEROUS**, who returns at a reduced level after a seven-month break. Broke well, tracked a solid pace (24.32; 23.85) while two wide/three path, seemed outpaced on the turn, cut the corner, and failed to threaten. Think she'll appreciate returning to a two-turn route, drew the advantageous inside post position, and wouldn't mind a wet track. **TUFF LUCK** tracked three wide, made an outside bid under a confident ride to take the lead at the five-sixteenths, then stayed on gamely between rivals. The barn went 10 for the last 32 (31%, \$2.58 ROI) with horses exiting a top-three finish. Hazlewood lands here instead of **SUMMER VIBES**, who wasn't away best from the rail, then was wired by the favorite in a slow-paced race. Swung outside into the stretch, then got up for second. MINISTER, listed as a Laurel vet scratch on 1/16, stretches out in good form with the speed to potentially grab the lead.

>> RACE 2

1. GOLDEN CHARM

2. ENIGMATIC

3. WATCH YOUR TONE

GOLDEN CHARM has won moving from route to sprint in the past and repeats the move while dropping back into the claiming ranks. Tracked from a loose pocket last time, raced in behind horses turning into the long stretch, altered course four wide, and only managed an even finish. The last-place finisher then placed in a \$7,500 "beaten" claimer with a 54 Beyer. Needs some pace help for a barn that went 4 for the last 17 (24%, \$2.55 ROI) moving from route to dirt sprint. **ENIGMATIC** set a pressured pace inside the odds-on winner through reasonable fractions, then hopped back to her left lead while remaining easily second best. Her early speed plays very well in this spot. **WATCH YOUR TONE** wasn't away the best from the rail, then found perfect position tracking a hot pace battle. Made a three-wide bid into the stretch and drew away in the final furlong. Barn sent out two winners here last week. SKIP THRU DA FIRE was wired by odds-on On a Proud Note, who then placed in a \$20,000 starter allowance with a 63 Beyer. Expect her to get close to the pace.

>> RACE 3

1. LAST GIFT

2. KUAGA

3. SONG TO REMEMBER

LAST GIFT prompted the 3-1 runner-up from the outside through solid fractions, attacked on the turn, and gamely wore that one down to score. She's the lone three-time winner in the field and figures right there when the field turns for home. A barn that went 3 for the last 10 (30%, \$2.60 ROI) with last-out winners. **KUAGA** set a three-ply pace from the rail, then stayed on for second behind the favored winner. She's hit the board in her last three starts, wheels back on short notice, and should be close to the pace. Burnham lands here instead of Barbados Bulldog, but Cruz departs for **SONG TO REMEMBER**, who drops and adds Lasix after being wired by odds-on Ready to Dial. The runner-up from that heat then ran third in Laurel's Xtra Heat Stakes with a 65 Beyer. Kicks late for a barn that went 3 for the last 11 (27%, \$2.38 ROI) with experienced dirt horses adding Lasix for the first time. PEACEFUL UNION overcame a slow start to graduate at Charles Town and might receive a strong race flow here. FLOYNESS might be the fastest early after dueling with the favored runner-up through hot splits at Parx. The third-finisher then won Parx's restricted Miss Behaviour Stakes with a 64 Beyer.

>> RACE 4

1. GALPIN SUNDAY

2. ENZO

3. ZIO LINO

Kentucky shippers do well here, and **GALPIN SUNDAY**, listed as a Laurel vet scratch (sick) on 2/5, gave a solid try at Churchill last time. Broke a beat slow, prompted three wide, advanced to press the pace three deep through a quick second quarter in 22.65 seconds, made a stretch lead, and tired from that mid-race bid. The runner-up then ran third in a \$50,000 "non-two" claimer at Turfway with a 77 Beyer. Expect him to get close to the pace for a barn that went 4 for the last 19 (21%, \$2.97 ROI) in the first after the claim. **ENZO** repeats the turf-to-dirt move that resulted in a narrow defeat four back. Tracked three wide in that heat, made the lead at the quarter pole, then tried hard to just miss. Expect him to be fresh out of the gate in his first start after a 261-day break. **ZIO LINO** broke sharp, tracked two wide/three path, made a three-wide bid to the front, and kept on chugging to graduate. Drew a comfortable post position and can work out a nice outside-tracking trip. Hazlewood departs for NANTUCKET, who overcame a lengthy layoff to post a pace-pressing victory at Penn National. This is a test from a pace and class standpoint.

>> RACE 5

1. FLIRTY BAJAN

2. GREYLINE STATION

3. FAYES HEART

FLIRTY BAJAN stumbled at the start, recovered to battle inside two other pace foes, then tired along the rail. Expecting a speedy try with the addition of blinkers. **GREYLINE STATION** made a three-wide bid into the teeth of a hot pace, then didn't change leads when finishing behind Close the Gate, who returned to place in the Spectacular Bid Stakes with a 69 Beyer. Think new blinkers helps him focus better on the task and hand. **FAYES HEART** seemed very temperamental in the paddock and post parade. Broke a beat slow from the rail, tracked a slow pace from the pocket, then couldn't go with Taj Mahal, who was entered in Saturday's Miracle Wood Stakes. Class drop works, and Perez lands here instead of Love Yourself. **IT'S ALL GRAVY**, listed as a Laurel vet scratch on 1/10, drops in class after being wired by Mailata, who won her next two stakes starts by a combined 22 1/2 lengths with Beyers of 81 and 74, respectively. **R J'S ICE** is a half-brother to Maryland Million Classic winner Brilliant Ice (94 dirt Beyer).

>> RACE 6

1. DOOMED

2. TASK FORCE

3. ALBERT FINNIGAN

DOOMED bobbed after the start, but recovered to clear off and set the pace on the fence. Came off the rail turning for home, and tired in the lane against a decent field. Don't mind him cutting back slightly in distance, and might revert to the rating tactics that resulted in his sole victory. **TASK FORCE**, listed as a Mahoning Valley vet scratch on 11/25, returns from a four-month break after scoring around three turns at Charles Town. The third-finisher from that heat then graduated by 7 1/4 lengths in a maiden special weight at Charles Town with a 74 Beyer. Lightly-raced gelding has upside and an underrated late kick. **ALBERT FINNIGAN** showed good early speed, opened up through a slow third quarter in 26.48, then was too good for that bottom maiden group. Not sure that trip is available to him as he steps up in class.

>> RACE 7

1. CRUZ RAMIREZ

2. PHLYING PHYLLIS

3. ASHES AND DIAMONDS

CRUZ RAMIREZ set a quick pace from the rail, then held firm in the stretch to deny a next-out winner. She must deal with a whopping 441-day layoff, but should show fresh speed with new Lasix for a barn that generally excels with long-layoff runners. **PHLYING PHYLLIS** broke sharp, tracked a quick pace from the pocket under urging, angled three wide into the stretch, then gained late on the favored pacesetting winner. Finished ahead of two next-out winners, with the fifth-finisher taking a \$30,000 starter-optional with a 64 Beyer. Never off the board in her career, she goes out for a barn that went 4 for the last 12 (33%, \$2.17 ROI) with horses returning from 61-120 day layoffs following a top-three finish. **ASHES AND DIAMONDS** looked pretty good scoring on dirt at Churchill two back, then might not have been at her best on synthetic at Turfway. Broke slow over the Tapeta, raced near the back behind a hot pace, then finished evenly. The seventh-finisher next won a first-level allowance at Turfway with an 85 Beyer. Late-runner needs some pace and race luck.

>> RACE 8

1. GRAYSON'S GIRL

2. TAP DANCIN COWGIRL

3. KILO ROAD

GRAYSON'S GIRL won her last start with Lasix and will receive the medication again after racing with mixed results in a pair of stakes. Settled outside at the back in the Politely, she was urged along and swung very wide into the stretch, then passed a couple of tired horses late. A late-running type needs a little bit of pace to adequately set up her late bid for a barn that went 10 for the last 26 (38%, \$2.12 ROI) with dirt horses returning from 61-120-day layoffs. **TAP DANCIN COWGIRL** was likely compromised by an extremely wide trip. Raced five wide on the backstretch, advanced four deep at the three-eighths, was urged along into the stretch, then understandably flattened out while hopping to her left lead right on the wire. Think she'll stay closer to the pace this time. **KILO ROAD** broke a beat slow, was hustled hard to get into the race, but wound up outsprinted and was last on the backstretch. Urged along on the turn, she finished evenly on the fence. Not sure she gets the proper race flow, but the barn went 6 for 17 (35%, \$2.91 ROI) between 1/17 and 2/15. Hazlewood lands here instead of SPENCERIAN, who was wired by odds-on Takethemoneyhoney (next-out second in the Barbara Fritchie with a 92 Beyer).

>> RACE 9

1. KITTYUP

2. BELLA MENTE

3. I'M A LIL WICKED

KITTYUP tracked a solid pace from between, advanced to prompt the favored winner from the outside, remained three wide, and let the runner-up move through on her inside. She brushed with that foe and stayed on evenly. Think she'll be the one to make the early running. **BELLA MENTE** might have aimed a bit high when debuting for \$20,000. Completely outsprinted behind a swift opening quarter mile, she swung outside, then passed tired horses despite hopping back to her left lead. Bred to handle this extra distance, she deserves a long look at this level for a barn that went 6 for the last 25 (24%, \$3.40 ROI) with second-out maidens. Vargas departs for Sweet Lexi. **I'M A LIL WICKED** sat a loose pocket, split rivals inside the top pick at the five-sixteenths, then rallied for second behind the favored pacesetting winner. She can work out a similar trip for a barn that sent out a 3-1 winner on 2/13. **QUALITY SWAG** takes a huge class drop after being wired in New York. Faced two next-out winners, with the runner-up graduating in a restricted \$75,000 maiden seller there with a 60 Beyer. Kicks on in the stretch. **SWEET LEXI** also gets some class relief after facing Juniper's Jubilee, who then scored at the \$40,000 level with a 57 Beyer.

KALI'S KEYS – by Kali Francois

Race 2: #1 Baby Sox - 8/1

Was RIGHT THERE in that effort last out at approximately the seven furlong distance within that mile showdown. This is an individual who improve second off the layoff. I saw a new leaf in this girl and Yomar Ortiz might have something to do with it - I love a 'jock's second time on a horse' angle.

Race 3: #7 Song to Remember - 6/1

I like the works leading into this first off the layoff effort. Normally, she only gets quick works like this coming out of the gate. However, these works are *fast* - it just reads that the rider is having to hold on for dear life in the mornings. This is the lowest level we've seen her, I have a feeling her physicals will be good when she gets in the paddock, as connection clearly thought highly of her. Coming in with an outside post sets up for a perfect confidence booster!

Race 7: #6 Fabia - 10/1

Yes, I will always be chasing this one. While it was always the discussion of what exactly is the best distance for her, I think we all got the answer last out. So you know what that means! Throw a new distance in. The turn of professionalism that she showed however, is what really sells me. Went up the rail confidently though a by no means a small gap, and had an excellent gallop out. Extra distance, here we come! And to boot, she comes out of a potentially key race (at the time of this typing) - take a look at the results of the 6th race from Saturday. Should give you an indication how this is going to shake down as well. (One of these days, I won't mind her at the mile either)

MACK'S FACTS – by Mackenzie Pfeiffer

R1: Tuff Luck looked fantastic last time out, where he ran a winning race just to miss out to a late closer. Hard to deny his chances at this level. Summer Vibes adds Lasix back on board in his first start after the claim. His gallop out from 2-back suggests he should be able to handle the added ground.

R2: Skip Thru Da Fire never really found her way into the race last time out, class relief and a clean trip could put the pieces back together here. Enigmatic will likely take plenty of action, as the controlling speed on the outside here, she seems tough to go against.

R3: Barbados Bulldog may have a chance to flip the finish from her last outing, against Kuaga, with the added ground in today's re-match. Peaceful Union may appreciate the pace setup here today, she looks to be the true close of this group.

R4: Galpin Sunday looks to benefit from the cutback in distance with his early speed. Blinkers back on here, if he can handle the pressure from the inside post, he may kick away early and not look back. Enzo, the full sibling to Witty, certainly has ability. I give him one race off the bench here.

R5: Greyline Station has made steady progress in each career start, facing quality stakes runner Close the Gate last out. Second Lasix and blinkers on here, he should have a bit of inside pace to target with his closing bid. Its All Gravy arrives first time gelding, Lasix, and takes the blinkers off. He has shown ability but was simply outclassed, suspect the freshening will suit him after switching trainers.

R6: Doomed should appreciate the class relief and change in company here. If faced with a fast track, I reference the September 13th effort, where the winner came back to win in tougher company with an 81 Beyer. Maupansant lacked any pace to target in his last mile effort, that shouldn't be a problem here.

R7: Shout to the Lord made a professional debut before switching barns and notching her maiden score over this course and distance. She left an impression on me, and then struggled to transfer that to PRX. I draw a line through the PRX outing and look for her to appreciate her return to LRL.

R8: I find myself suspect of the pace scenario in this group, it likely sets up for the outside pair to move along early. Grayson's Girl was outsprinted early in her last outing, but looks well positioned in this group to work a trip similar to the 3-back. Note, Perez is back on the ultra-game Itsamonstamash.

R9: Fastfeld has yet to find a straightforward trip but the late interest last out may be telling. The second wire finish will give her plenty of real estate for her late run. I'm a Lil Wicked was plenty game on the inside last out, her and Kittyup will likely pair up early.

TODAY'S HOT TRAINER STATS

RACE 1

#6 - Tuff Luck

Trainer: Hugh McMahon

Exiting a Top-3 Finish: 10 for 32 (31%, \$2.58 ROI)

RACE 2

#5 - Golden Charm

Trainer: Jose Magana

Route to Dirt Sprint: 4 for 17 (24%, \$2.55 ROI)

RACE 3

#3 - Last Gift

Trainer: Jose Corrales

Last-Out Winners: 3 for 10 (30%, \$2.60 ROI)

RACE 3

#7 - Song to Remember

Trainer: Todd Beattie

Experienced Horses, First-Lasix, Dirt: 3 for 11 (27%, \$2.38 ROI)

RACE 4

#1 - Galpin Sunday

Trainer: Lacey Gaudet

First After Claim: 4 for 19 (21%, \$2.97 ROI)

RACE 7

#6 - Phlying Phyllis

Trainer: Gary Capuano

First After 61-120 Days After Top-3 Finish: 4 for 12 (33%, \$2.17 ROI)

RACE 8

#2 - Kilo Road

Trainer: Hugh McMahon

Between 1/17 and 2/15: 6 for 17 (35%, \$2.91 ROI)

RACE 8

#3 - Grayson's Girl

Trainer: Brittany Russell

First After 61-120 Days, Dirt: 10 for 26 (38%, \$2.12 ROI)

RACE 9

#6 - Bella Mente

Trainer: Robbie Bailes

Second-Out Maidens: 6 for 25 (24%, \$3.40 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: OC20k/SAL20k, 4YO+, 1 1/16 Miles, Dirt

Replay Notes:

- **#1 ARMED AND DANGEROUS** sat a good trip last out (1M, CNL, 07/23/26) and was fully extended to the wire. Returns from layoff today.
- **#2 MUGATU** lost ground racing 4-5W on the turn last out (1M, Lrl, 02/05/26) which warrants a slight UPGRADE. The pace was also not quite strong enough to see him to best effect - a 48.59 half, the top two finishers ran 1-2 the whole way around while the eventual 36/1 shot who was positioned 3rd all the way into the lane (**#4 THE COUNT IS ON** – downgrade?) managed to hold on for 4th; closers struggled to get involved, potentially warranting another UPGRADE for MUGATU.
- Having sat a good trip, **#3 DATS MY PHARAOH** powered away from inferior rivals and hit the line with good energy before galloping out with his ears pricked last out (1 1/16M, LRL, 02/05/26) – a sign he won with gas in the tank and has potentially more to offer again. His energetic stretch run was partly aided by the fact he well positioned in a slowly run race and 4/5 on the board, but there's no denying that he's in great for at the moment and he might not have reached his peak just yet.
- Although the pace was not frantic, **#5 SUMMER VIBES** finished well into 2nd from well back last out (6F, LRL, 01/16/26) and then galloped out nicely, suggesting that the stretch back out in trip should pose no issue to him today. Lasix go back ON.
- **#6 TUFF LUCK** had no real excuse but was fractionally wide on both turns last out (1 1/16M, LRL, 01/10/26) – tiniest of upgrades. Logical contender today.
- Similarly to #5 SUMMER VIBES, after being shuffled back ever so slightly on the far turn, **#7 MINISTER** showed good stamina to draw off and win cozily in a strongly run 7F contest last out (7F, LRL, 12/05/25); he left the impression that he'll handle two turns just fine.

Race 2: Claiming 7.5k, 4YO+F, 7 Furlongs, Dirt

Replay Notes:

- **#1 BABY SOX** ran very well last out (1M, LRL, 02/12/26) and is deserving of a slight UPGRADE as she made (and largely sustained) a premature move racing into the far turn and then lost ground racing ~4W on the bend before staying on for 4th, just a 1/4L off 2nd.
- **#2 IT'SFIFTYSHADETIME** lost a little ground swinging 6W off the bend into the lane last out (1M, LRL, 02/12/26), then finished with credit before her rider stood up ~1/16 pole; she could have finished a little closer than she did and looks to be heading back in the right direction following a poor showing two-back.
- After sitting a good trip, **#3 WATCH YOUR TONE** drew off in the lane to score nicely last time (7F, LRL, 02/13/26), seemingly with something in hand; it wouldn't surprise if she broke back into the 60+ Beyer range today.
- **#4 SKIP THRU DA FIRE** was shuffled back a little when struggling to hold her early position ~5/8 pole last out (6F, LRL, 01/23/26) but that doesn't really explain why she ran quite so poorly, and she now has questions to answer.
- Both **#5 GOLDEN CHARM** and **#6 ENIGMATIC** sat good trips in their respective last starts and were fully extended to the wire. The cut back to 7F today could help the latter.

Race 3: Claiming 25k, 3YOF, 6 Furlongs, Dirt

Replay Notes:

- With Lasix on first time, **#2 KUAGA** was very game in defeat last out (5 1/2F, LRL, 02/14/26), finishing 3/4L ahead of **#5 BARBADOS BULLDOG**; however, the latter runner had given away far more than KUAGA ground racing 3-5W on the turn, was closing late and in front on the gallop out, arguably running a more promising race with today's 6F test in mind.
- **#6 ONLY MARIA** was squeezed back out of a position when in a little tight ~1/2m pole last out (5 1/2F, LRL, 12/26/25) then lost a little ground swinging wide into the lane, but it's hard to say either factor greatly hindered her chances/performance. Lasix on today.

- Although she was a long-shot, following a career best 51 Beyer two-back, it was still disappointing to see **#7 SONG TO REMEMBER** post just a 39 Beyer last time (6F, PEN, 11/26/25) considering that she had everything in her favor – she had a very strong pace to run at and the track was presenting a closer bias. Maybe a ‘bounce’ and/or the track conditions were against her? Still, she underperformed, period, and will need more today as lasix go on.
- **#1 PEACEFUL UNION**, **#3 LAST GIFT** and **#4 FLOYNESS** sat good trips in their respective last starts and were fully extended to the wire.

Race 4: Claiming 40k, 4YO+, 5 ½ Furlongs, Dirt

Replay Notes:

- **#1 GALPIN SUNDAY** prompted an honest pace, then vied for the lead while 3W, took over on the home turn and opened up in the stretch last time (7F, CD, 11/28/25) before fading deep inside the final furlong. While his trip wasn’t bad, he did by far the best of the speed (race was dominated by closers) which warrants a small PACE UPGRADE. Cutting back to 5 1/2F today could suit. (Note: he drew the outside post last time and therefore had plenty of space to work forward after breaking a beat slowly; he might struggle to adopt the same forward position today if again a step slow, this time from the rail). Blinkers on.
- Not entirely sure why, but after sitting a good ground saving trip, the jockey never really got into a full drive on **#2 EL JUNIOR** last out (5F, PIM, 05/09/26) – the gelding was running on with decent energy from rear despite the rider remaining high in the saddle and only tapping the crop down the shoulder; he seemingly could have finished closer with a more aggressive ride. Returns from a lengthy layoff today.
- **#3 ENZO** sat a good trip last time (5F Turf (good), DEL, 06/06/25) and was fully extended to the wire. Returns from layoff today.
- Prior to overcoming a 3W trip to break his maiden in likable fashion last time (5 1/2F, LRL, 02/04/26), it had been highlighted in these lines that **#4 ZIO LINO** simply looked short of fitness when returning from a lengthy layoff two-back; he can be forgiven for that defeat and we can overlook the speed fig - he clearly stepped forward and his winning figure (58 Beyer) and effort last time seems a truer reflection of his ability.
- **#5 TETHERED SOUL** lugged out on the turn when returning from a layoff last time (6F, LRL, 11/28/25).
- **#6 NANTUCKET** obliged at odds of 2/5 when returning from a lengthy layoff last time (5 1/2F, PEN, 12/18/25); while he’s entitled to step forward for that run and he remains lightly raced, opening the door for further natural improvement, he did sit a good trip in that race and was fully extended to the wire – presuming he does step forward today, it might not be a huge step. Respected, nonetheless.

Race 5: Maiden Claiming 40k, 3YO, 5 ½ Furlongs, Dirt

Replay Notes:

- **#2 FAYES HEART** sat a good trip rail last time (6F, LRL, 02/06/26) and was fully extended to the wire.
- There was no visible reason as to why **#3 VIDA** ran so far below form as the 1/5 fav last time (6 1/2F, CT, 02/12/26) – he never lifted a hoof and now has questions to answer off just 10 days rest.
- Similarly, there was no visible reason as to why **#5 IT’S ALL GRAVY** ran so far below par in his last start (1M, PRX, 10/29/25); it was his sole start with blinkers on, though, and they now come off today – was his poor showing a blinker related issue? Whatever the case, the fact that speed held well seems irrelevant as he was never traveling from before halfway. Cuts back to 5 1/2F off the bench today following a gelding operation with Lasix on and blinkers off – three factors that could help him step back in the right direction on debut for Magee.
- **#6 FLIRTY BAJAN** bobbed at the start last out (6F, LRL, 02/06/26) but it made no difference to his trip – he still broke on top, then ran a nice race after dueling on the rail into the lane. Blinkers on today, he’s a logical contender.
- **#7 GREYLINE STATION** was fractionally wide on the turn last out but overall sat a good trip and was fully extended to the wire (left lead lane). Blinkers on today.

Race 6: Claiming 12.5k, 4YO+, 1 Mile, Dirt

Replay Notes:

- **#2 MAUPANSANT** ran well last time (1 1/16M, LRL, 02/05/26) despite not having raced fractionally wide and not having had quite enough pace to run at for him to show his best – (very small) UPGRADE. In the same race, **#7 SHOT FOR THE MOON** broke from the outside gate and sat an even wider trip than MAUPANSANT while also trying to close into the slow pace from further back than that foe. His effort deserves a larger UPGRADE, and it wouldn’t surprise if he were to take a notable step forward today as he makes just his fourth lifetime start/second going beyond 6F. Also in the same race, **#9 RETURN FIRE** was the one setting the slow fractions on the rail – he failed to take advantage of

that setup though and quickly faded in the stretch. He has questions to answer today. **#8 UNCLE GREY** was also pace compromised and slightly wide at 50/1; he failed to factor and was well beaten but did have things somewhat against him – mark his effort up a little too.

- **#3 DOOMED** bobbled slightly at the break last out (1 1/8M, AQU, 12/28/25) but it made no difference to his trip or the result – he ran a nice race at 13/1 and today seems a logical contender cutting back to a flat mile on debut for Ness.
- **#4 TASK FORCE** was the beneficiary of a closer bias (and good trip) when breaking his maiden last out (1 1/16M, CT, 10/23/25) – DOWNGRADE. There was also a closer bias present when he finished 2nd two-back. Returns from layoff today.
- **#1 RIGHT OF RUSH**, **#5 CHRISTMAS SPIRIT** and **#6 ALBERT FINNIGAN** sat good trips in their respective last starts and were fully extended to the wire.

Race 7: N1X Allowance, 4YO+F, 7 Furlongs, Dirt

Replay Notes:

- **#1 STAR BLESSING (IRE)** caught a slightly wide trip last time (1M Turf, IND, 11/03/25); she was never really on terms, though, (despite having had a wicked pace to run at) and it's hard to say the ground loss really cost her that much. Makes dirt debut on first start for Beattie today following layoff.
- **#2 NOBODY'S GIRL** showed both speed and stamina with a game effort in defeat last out (1 1/16M, LRL, 12/14/25); 7F could suit her well.
- **#3 CRUZ RAMIREZ** managed to win in visually taking fashion on debut (6F, LRL, 12/08/24) despite having set a legitimate pace that played into the hands of closers – PACE UPGRADE. Returns from a lengthy layoff with Lasix on today.
- Although one would still have liked to have seen more from **#1A SHOUT TO THE LORD** last out (1M 70Y, PRX, 11/11/25), things certainly didn't go right for him and he can probably be given a pass for his defeat: he was sideswiped at the break and away slowly in last, then pulled hard and fought the rider in rear while looking uncomfortable behind the kickback, and he then raced ~5W on the far turn before stopping. The effort was followed by a layoff too, potentially indicating something was amiss. Eligible to bounce back today.
- Although strong, the pace held well in **#4 BOURBON N LACE**'s last start (1M, LRL, 11/15/26), with the 2nd and 3rd place finishers (at odds of 13/1 and 3/2) running 1-2 into deep stretch before BNL blew right by them from 10L back with his ears pricked in a manner to suggest he won with something in hand. There was a then a large gap back to 4th. It was a tidy effort that earned him a career best 55 Beyer and he might not have peaked just yet. Short turn around.
- **#5 PHLYING PHYLLIS** had a rival laying on her in the lane last time (7F, LRL, 12/14/25) but it didn't seem to make much difference. She just missed after sitting a great trip and receiving a great setup; result and speed fig seem fair.
- **#6 FABIA** sat a dream trip when winning last out (6F, LRL, 02/06/26), possibly warranting a downgrade. However, she also managed to close into fairly slow fractions and had been fractious in the gate (an often-overlooked way in which one can upgrade a performance). She's clearly in fine form, whatever the case, and figures to play another role today.
- Prior to being outclassed in a tough allowance on the synth at Turfway last time, **#7 ASHES AND DIAMONDS** had managed to run down a decent 4/5 fav with a nice looking win on the dirt (7 1/2F, CD, 11/16/25), despite having had to wait in traffic in last (when he really needed to have been building momentum) for most of the far turn – he was slightly better than the winning margin and 68 Beyer that day suggest. Back to dirt today.

Race 8: OC40k/N2X Allowance, 4YO+F, 6 Furlongs, Dirt

Replay Notes:

- **#1 TAP DANCIN COWGIRL** was caught ~5W+ on the turn last out (7F, LRL, 02/04/26) which warrants a slight UPGRADE. Cuts back to 6F today with a better draw.
- **#3 GRAYSON'S GIRL** lost a little ground swinging 7W+ off the turn from ~3/16 pole last out (6F, LRL, 12/20/25) which could warrant an upgrade. However, she was also riding the closer bias present this day and overall, her trip was fine (probably leave result/fig as is). Lasix back on today.
- Although they raced tight between horses (as a pair) for the majority of the contest (often not ideal), there was no real visible reason as to why either **#4 ITSAMONSTAMASH** nor **#6 I'M A CUTIE PIE** ran below par last out (7F, LRL, 02/04/26). Both need to bounce back returning to 6F today. Note: **I'M A CUTIE PIE** was not hard ridden when beaten in the lane, slightly exasperating the margin of defeat.
- **#2 KILO ROAD** and **#5 SPENCERIAN** sat good trips in their respective last starts and were fully extended to the wire. Lasix go back on **SPENCERIAN** (who just looked a touch flat last time (1M, LRL, 01/17/26)) today as she cus back to 6F.

Race 9: Maiden Claiming 12.5k, 3YOF, 1 Mile, Dirt

Replay Notes:

- **#4 FASTFIELD** stumbled awkwardly at the break last out (7F, LRL, 02/06/26), chased the honest pace from mid-pack/rear, swung slightly wide into the lane, then finished well to split **#1 I'M A LIL WICKED** and **#2 KITTYUP**. At first glance, you'd say **FASTFIELD** ran a more promising race than her two re-opposing foes with today's 1M trip in mind. However, she recovered very quickly from her stumble (it didn't actually seem to cost her), and **I'M A LIL WICKED** and **KITTYUP** had already done plenty of work sitting close to the honest pace, so **FASTFIELD** did have the best pace setup of the three. What's more, it was actually **KITTYUP** (who'd sat closest to the pace and then faded into 4th) who ended up in front on the gallop out (!). As was the case when they all met two-back, it's really hard to argue that any one is/was better than the other based solely off tape.
- **#3 QUALITY SWAG** was wide on the turn last out (1M, AQU, 01/22/26) but that doesn't really explain why she ran poorly. Drops in for a tag today.
- **#5 SWEET LEXI** bore out from the outside gate last time (5 1/2F, LRL, 01/17/26), then was outrun. She'll need more today, period; extra ground (slower pace) should help her travel better early on today, though.
- Especially with a wide draw, we can expect more from **#6 BELLA MENTE** second out today: on debut last time (6F, LRL, 02/13/26), she broke slowly, then resisted the kickback, climbed, and dropped herself out into a hopelessly detached last; when so far back that she was out of the kickback, though, she stayed on with credit and made up 10L at an even pace before galloping out well. She physically looked like further would suit and if keeping her head clean today, improvement seems inevitable.

Horses to Follow

R4: GALPIN SUNDAY (7/2 ML)

GALPIN SUNDAY was part of a fast early pace that strongly favored closers when last seen over seven furlongs at Churchill Downs. While his two fellow pace-pressers—both well-backed at 4/1—folded to finish seventh and eleventh, GALPIN took over in the lane, battled on into deep stretch, and gamely stuck around to be beaten just four lengths into fifth, a far better effort than it looks on paper. The race has since worked out well, with five of the six horses he finished ahead of returning to run back, all posting improved Beyers and recording finishes of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 3rd, and 5th—including two who earned 72 and 74 figures—strongly suggesting he's entitled to a meaningful pace upgrade of his own. Claimed out of that effort by in-form trainer Lacey Gaudet, he now cuts back to 5 1/2 furlongs with blinkers added for his Maryland debut in the fourth. Off that upgradable 62 Beyer and facing considerably softer company, he looks to offer solid value at 7/2 on the morning line.

R9: BELLA MENTE (12/1 ML)

Over the last two years, trainer Robbie Bailes has struck at a very strong 55% (6-for-11; \$5.75 ROI) with runners dropping in claiming price by 50% or more, so we shouldn't completely dismiss the rag of the nightcap, BELLA MENTE. This daughter of SILVER STATE debuted for \$25k just nine days ago; visibly green and climbing in behind kickback when outsped early, she dropped herself almost 25 lengths off the lead at the first call and effectively eliminated any chance of success. However, when she managed to angle out of the kickback rounding the far turn, she stayed on with credit through the lane and made up a full 10 lengths before galloping out strongly in front of the field. It seems highly unlikely that her Beyer Speed Figure of 20 is a true reflection of her ability, and stretching out to a mile with a kickback-free draw in post six looks likely to unlock that untapped potential. At 12/1 on the morning line, there's enough to like about her chances to take a swing in a race of this nature.

FUTURE HORSES TO WATCH

CHESAPEAKE DREAM (*Breezed 3F - :38.00 at LRL on 8/24*)

Trainer: Brittany Russell

Last Race: April 25, 4th race

Finish: 3rd by 3

LYUDMILA (*Breezed 4F - :49.00 at TAM on 12/20*)

Trainer: Justin Nixon

Last Race: Nov. 21, 6th race

Finish: 1st by 6

Sent up between horses early through a white-hot first quarter, then continued to duel through a strong half, tiring in the final sixteenth. Tab back in dirt allowance sprint up to 7 furlongs.

POWER GRID

Trainer: Jerry Robb

Last Race: Dec. 27, 8th race

Finish: 5th by 9 1/2

Appeared on the upswing, but threw in a puzzler in the Heft Stakes, where the pace situation was not to his liking. Forced to chase the gate to wire winner while 3 wide early, raced 4-5 wide leaving the 3/8 pole, then flat when asked.

SUJO (*Breezed 4F - :48.40 at TAM on 2/14*)

Trainer: Greg Sacco

Last Race: Jan. 16, 7th race

Finish: 4th by 4 ¾ 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.

HELDISH (*Entered Fri 2/27 at Laurel – Race 5*)

Trainer: Robin Graham

Last Race: Feb. 5, 6th race

Finish: DNF - lost rider

Looked to be sitting on a good performance, but stumbled at the start and lost the rider before running away from the field. Multiple stakes-placed gelding has a good amount of back class, and is a snug fit at the \$7,500 "beaten" claiming ranks.

DON'T WAIT UP (*Entered Fri 2/27 at Laurel – Race 4*)

Trainer: Ferris Allen

Last Race: Feb. 13, 3rd

Finish: 2nd by 3/4

Bumped lightly at the start, then took plenty of dirt in his face while racing at the back. Split rivals turning into the stretch, and rallied nicely inside the winner. Reclaimed out of that race, he fits at the \$20,000 starter-optional level.

Gun Runner filly sold for a million dollars as a yearling, and was a professional debut winner. Pinched a bit at the start, recovered to track the pace outside, then ran by the odds-on favorite in the stretch. Expect her to winter at Tampa Bay Downs.

BETTER WATCH IT

Trainer: Madison Meyers

Last Race: Nov. 16, 1st race

Finish: 5th by 9

Sent off the favorite in a "non-two" starter allowance, he was bumped at the start and steadied in behind horses heading into the first turn. That left him saving ground in midpack behind a glacial opening quarter in 25.15. By the time he got a seam in the upper stretch, the runaway winner was long gone.

LADY LYDIA (*Breezed 4F - :50.40 at LRL on 2/5*)

Trainer: Brittany Russell

Last Race: Jan. 9, 7th race

Finish: 4th by 13 1/4

Favored early in the wagering cycle, this Quality Road filly was caught in close quarters leaving the starting gate, taken to the 6 path in upper stretch, then came up empty late while continuing wide vs. romping 10-length winner Velocity Girl.

LADY ZETA

Trainer: Lacey Gaudet

Last Race: Feb. 4, 1st race

Finish: 5th by 5 1/2

Expected to be one of the speeds, she instead broke poorly and was last on the rail entering the turn. Swung widest into the stretch, and was no match for the pacesetter winner, but did show some interest on the gallop-out. Thirteen-time winner deserves another shot in a \$7,500 conditioned seller.

BARBADOS BULLDOG (*Entered TODAY at Laurel – Race 3*)

Trainer: Jose Corrales

Last Race: Feb. 14, 4th

Finish: 3rd by 2 1/2

Appeared to steady slightly at the three-eighths pole, then made a three-wide bid into contention before flattening out slightly in the final furlong. She fits best between \$20,000 and \$40,000 sprinting against fellow 3-year-old fillies.

KINDA KRAZY

Trainer: Lacey Gaudet

Last Race: Feb. 13, 6th

Finish: 3rd by 4 1/2

Gave a solid try following a lengthy layoff. Sideswiped leaving the gate, then raced in a bit tight from the pocket entering the turn. Angled outside in the stretch, and finished evenly for a minor award.

JOCKEY CALLS

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

Race 1: Yedsit Hazlewood - #5 - Summer Vibes; #6 - Tuff Luck >>> **Hazlewood rides TUFF LUCK**

Race 3: Angel Cruz - #2 - Kuaga; #7 - Song to Remember >>> **Cruz rides SONG TO REMEMBER**

Race 3: Matilda Burnham - #2 - Kuaga; #5 - Barbados Bulldog >>> **Burnham rides KUAGA**

Race 4: Yedsit Hazlewood - #4 - Zio Lio; #6 - Nantucket >>> **Hazlewood rides NANTUCKET**

Race 5: Xavier Perez - #2 - Fayes Heart; #4 - Love Yourself >>> **Perez rides FAYES HEART**

Race 6: Matilda Burnham - #1 - Right of Rush; #8 - Uncle Grey >>> **Burnham rides RIGHT OF RUSH**

Race 8: Yedsit Hazlewood - #2 - Kilo Road; #5 - Spencerian >>> **Hazlewood rides KILO ROAD**

Race 9: Jose Vargas - #5 - Sweet Lexi; #6 - Bella Mente >>> **Vargas rides SWEET LEXI**

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

A recap of SATURDAY, FEB. 21 action at Laurel Park. Visit theracingbiz.com for John Piasek's FREE full analysis of today's Laurel card.

Race 1: The opener featured an exciting stretch battle between early leader Meg and Moon Cache. Meg ran a courageous race, but **Moon Cache** ultimately wore her down for her first official victory in 364 days.

Race 2: This was essentially a public and paid workout for **Bring the Smoke**. He easily took control of the race from the start and opened up on his three overmatched rivals, none of whom did much running.

Race 3: Joe the Jet sat off early leader Guaponess in the two-path and wore him down in the stretch to prevail as the 8-5 favorite.

Race 4: After two consecutive subpar efforts, **Intrepid's Legacy** got back to his winning ways, easily dusting an overmatched group.

Race 5: In his 8-year-old debut, **No Cents** split horses at the top of the stretch and worked his way past heavily favored Prince of Jericho to win in a headbobbing photo finish. He's now won eight times in 33 career starts with earnings of over \$530,000.

Race 6: The big question of this race revolved around **Mad for Maddy**. How would she run first off a 198-day layoff? The answer, as it turned out, was just fine. She made the lead on the far turn and kept the rest at bay to win at 5-1.

Race 7: Peach Tie is a win machine. She made a three-wide move after the lead on the turn and kicked away to win the Wide Country Stakes, her fourth win in a row and her fifth in six career races.

Race 8: The Miracle Wood Stakes was a thriller. **Taj Mahal** and Let's Go Lando engaged in a battle throughout the stretch run. Let's Go Lando gave it his all on the outside, but early leader Taj Mahal wouldn't let him go by. He held on and completed a stakes sweep for Brittany and Sheldon Russell. It was an impressive performance by Taj Mahal, considering it was only his second career start.

Race 9: In her first start for a tag, **Honor Thy Cookie** made the front on the far turn and held clear to break her maiden at sixth asking.

PAST TRACK TRENDS

Nov. 1 – Fair

Nov. 2 – SPEED BIAS

Nov. 7 – CLOSERS BIAS

(OUTSIDE LEAN)

Nov. 8 – SPEED BIAS

Nov. 9 – Fair

Nov. 14 – Fair

Nov. 15 – Fair

Nov. 16 – Fair

Nov. 21 - CLOSERS BIAS

Nov. 22 - Fair

Nov. 23 - CLOSERS BIAS

Nov. 27 – Fair

Nov. 28 – Fair (stiff tailwind

backstretch; headwind stretch)

Nov. 29 – Fair

Nov. 30 – Fair

Dec. 5 – Fair

Dec. 6 – Fair

Dec. 7 – Fair

Dec. 12 – Fair

Dec. 13 – Fair

Dec. 14 – Fair

Dec. 19 - Fair (stiff tailwind
backstretch; headwind stretch)

Dec. 20 - CLOSERS BIAS

Dec. 21 - Fair

Dec. 26 – Fair

Dec. 27 – Fair

Dec. 28 – Fair

Jan. 9 – Fair

Jan. 10 – Fair

Jan. 16 – Fair

Jan. 17 – Fair

Jan. 23 – Fair

Jan. 30 - (only 1 race)

Feb. 4 – Fair

Feb. 5 – Fair

Feb. 6 – Fair

Feb. 12– CLOSERS BIAS

Feb. 13– Fair (slight speed lean)

Feb. 14– Fair

Feb. 15– Fair

