



LAUREL PARK

HANDICAPPING GUIDE for FRIDAY, MAY 22

TODAY'S SELECTIONS FROM THE LAUREL PARK TEAM



KEITH FEUSTLE



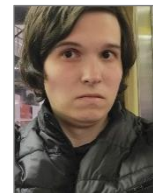
KALI FRANCOIS



DAN ILLMAN



MACK PFEIFFER



JOHN PIASSEK



DAVE RODMAN

RACE 1:	1-2-12-9	12-2-8-9	9-4-12-2	2-12-1-3	14-12-3-8	3-2-5-9
RACE 2:	3-4-2-5	2-4-3-5	5-2-6-3	2-1-3-4	2-4-5-3	4-2-1-5
RACE 3:	2-3-7-1	8-3-7-1	2-4-7-1	3-5-7-4	8-3-7-2	1-4-8-5
RACE 4:	5-2-7-1	2-7-5-6	2-5-1-6	2-7-1-3	2-1-6-5	4-5-2-1
RACE 5:	1-4-5-2	6-1-8-5	9-5-1-3	4-1-5-2	1-3-6-4	2-4-1-5
RACE 6:	2-8-1-6	1-6-8-9	8-2-5-6	1-8-5-9	1-8-6-5	6-5-1-8
RACE 7:	6-4-2-3	2-4-3-5	6-4-2-3	6-4-2-5	4-2-6-3	4-5-6-2
RACE 8:	6-2-1-5	6-3-5-2	6-1-2-5	6-5-4-2	5-6-4-1	6-2-5-1
RACE 9:	1-3-8-4	2-1-7-9	8-4-3-1	3-8-5-4	4-3-2-8	2-1-9-5

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.
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TODAY'S ANALYSIS - by Dan Illman

>> RACE 1

1. DON'T DO IT

2. HALF A DECK

3. LET HER PASS BY

The first post is NOON, and there are two "Value Pick 5" wagers (first five races; last five races), each with a low 12% takeout rate. **DON'T DO IT** adds Lasix and switches surfaces as a half-sister to five turf winners. Faced runaway winners in her last two, and might have matured greatly over the winter. **HALF A DECK** switches surfaces out of a half to stakes-placed turf router Hopeful Image (81 turf Beyer). Like the top pick, she returns from a layoff with new Lasix, and she was compromised by an intensely speed-friendly track in her most recent start. Hazlewood departs for Barbed Wire Barbie. **LET HER PASS BY** set the pace from the inside, then was game to hold second despite being very late to change leads. The winner of that heat then ran third in a quarter starter-optional with a 55 Beyer. Expect her to get close to the pace. **BASHFUL BABY** deserves a long look if able to escape the Also Eligible list. **HAIL NO** faced three next-out winners in her final start last year, with the ninth-finisher graduating for \$20,000 with a 62 Beyer. She's another with decent speed. **TRULY AN HONOR** pulled very hard to a pocket position, split rivals two-to-three wide, then swapped leads several times. The fourth-finisher next scored for \$16,000 with a 62 Beyer. Expect her to settle better at this shorter distance. **DREAM OVERTURE** was wired in her lone turf start, and adds Lasix for seasonal debut. **EVER YOURS** has never been this cheap on turf. The third-finisher from her last grass appearance then won for \$30,000 at Colonial with a 58 Beyer.

>> RACE 2

1. ENGAGE AT WILL

2. REBELKA

3. SWEET BOURBON TEA

ENGAGE AT WILL was off a hair slow, but recovered quickly and was sent through along the inside. Outsprinted to track the odds-on winner from the pocket over the speed-friendly track, she eased outside in the stretch and finished evenly. This barn went 6 for the last 21 (29%, \$2.74 ROI) with second-out juvenile maidens on dirt. **REBELKA** broke quickly, but greenly drifted off the rail entering the turn, and was outpaced. To her credit, she re-rallied in the stretch despite being late to change leads and finished ahead of the top pick. Perhaps she'll focus better with blinkers for a barn that sent out a 2-1 winner at Mountaineer on 5/11. **SWEET BOURBON TEA** broke inward and bumped a foe, saved ground at the back, made an early lead change on the turn, then finished evenly behind the top two picks. **THE STORK CLUB** scratched after running off during the post parade prior to that 5/1 heat. She's a half-sister to juvenile stakes-winning dirt sprinter Do It For Michael (won debut; 80 dirt Beyer). Perez departs for **PARIS BY NIGHT** (\$2,500 yearling).

>> RACE 3

1. SKITTLIEDAT

2. PRINCESS CLEMMIE

3. BELLA ESTRELA

SKITTLIEDAT broke a beat slow when wired earlier in the month, settled into a stalking position off the rail, found the inside after a half-mile, cut the corner into the stretch, then made up a couple of lengths with a solid gallop-out. Tactical enough to work out a similar midpack trip while saving ground. Kingsley departs for **PRINCESS CLEMMIE**, who should show fresh early speed as she stretches out in distance and adds blinkers for her seasonal debut. Wired by the favorite in her final start last year, a race that produced Sweeterthanwhiskey, a next-out runner-up in a \$16,000 "non-three" seller with a 72 Beyer. This barn went 5 for the last 20 (25%, \$2.34 ROI) with turf horses returning from layoffs between 180 and 365 days. **BELLA ESTRELA** acted up behind the gate, then reared terribly at the start, losing the rider in the process. Worked out a pocket trip two back, was in behind rivals in the upper

stretch, then finished evenly in between. Kicks late for a barn that sent out a 3-1 winner at Aqueduct on 5/16. DREAM LEADER was wired in lone turf outing. The third-finisher then won a \$7,500 "non-three" claimer at Meadowlands with a 70 Beyer. Ruiz departs for QUEEN ROCKET.

>> RACE 4

1. HYLLA

2. SHE'S A CANNY LASS

3. ASHWEEE

HYLLA pressed the pace while three wide at Keeneland, raced in between horses on the turn, then tired in the final three-sixteenths. The winner of that race repeated in a quarter starter allowance at Parx with a 73 Beyer. Expect early speed for a barn that went 11 for the last 32 (34%, \$2.02 ROI) off the claim. **SHE'S A CANNY LASS** drops in class and distance, adds Lasix for the first time, and switches surfaces for her second start. This barn went 5 for the last 21 (24%, \$2.11 ROI) with second-out maidens on the flat. **ASHWEEE** was no match for a runaway favored winner when returned to dirt. She was wired in her only other dirt appearance, and still retains upside potential. GHASEL (\$5,000 yearling) is out of multiple stakes-place dirt sprinter Onestaratatime (79 dirt Beyer).

>> RACE 5

1. SPRESSO MAR

2. NATTIE'S BOSS

3. LIGHT DE NIGHT

There isn't much black type close up in **SPRESSO MAR's** pedigree, but the second dam was a Grade 3-winning dirt sprinter who won her debut, as well as her only grass start. The May 15 gate work matches up with the barn's 5-year-old gelding Anytime (unplaced in two starts over hurdles). Perhaps they breezed in company for a barn that went 5 for the last 25 (20%, \$4.77 ROI) with first-time starters. **NATTIE'S BOSS** grabbed the early lead in her turf debut, shrugged off pace challenges from the favored fifth-finisher and the 7-2 eighth-finisher, then tired in the stretch. Figures close to the pace once again. Ruiz departs for **LIGHT DE NIGHT**, who returns from a 202-day layoff after a solid turf debut. Settled behind a fast pace, then rallied for second, ahead of one next-out dirt winner. This barn went 11 for 42 (26%, \$2.25 ROI) between 11/2 and 5/16. BRIKELI is a half-sister to stakes-winning dirt sprinter Concrete Glory (97 dirt Beyer). ROCK TALK switches surfaces as a half to Grade 3-placed turf sprinter After Five out of stakes-winning turf miler Idle Talk (84 turf Beyer).

>> RACE 6

1. NIECEY

2. GOLDEN SOVEREIGN

3. GOTTA BE DA SHOES

NIECEY stalked two-to-three wide on Tampa Bay turf two back, made a three-wide bid on the second bend, then hopped back to her left lead when in between horses. Seems well-entered for the \$16,000 upon her circuit return. **GOLDEN SOVEREIGN** switches surfaces out of a half-sister to stakes-winning turf miler Conquest Hardcandy (94 turf Beyer). Their second dam was a Grade 3-winning turf router. Took money for both dirt starts at Parx. Mena lands here instead of **GOTTA BE DA SHOES**, who was listed as a Laurel Park vet scratch (sick) on 11/29. She returns from a 195-day layoff after a tough trip in her 2025 finale. Checked very hard entering the turn to race outside at the back, she split rivals in the stretch, and made up almost six lengths despite changing back to her left lead. That race produced three next-out winners, with the ninth-finisher scoring for \$20,000 with a 62 Beyer. Kicks late for a barn that sent out turf-sprint maiden claiming winner Dad Joke off a 303-day layoff on 4/26. Think we'll see better positional speed from FORTY SEVEN SMOKER, who finished behind Salty One (next-out 55 Beyer in quarter starter) in promising seasonal debut.

>> RACE 7

1. PROBABLE ANGLE

2. LAST GIFT

3. STAY IN TUNE

PROBABLE ANGLE adds blinkers after being wired by favored Last Gift over a speed-friendly track. Stalked outside, was urged along on the turn, eased three deep into the stretch, and finished evenly. Worked a bullet three-eighths earlier in the month (presumably with blinkers), and can threaten with a late kick for a barn that went 4 for the last 14 (29%, \$2.53 ROI) with dirt horses in the first after the claim. **LAST GIFT** is a six-time winner who took advantage of that speed track when wiring three of these. Cleared off to set an uncontested pace from the rail, came off the inside, and stayed strong. Figures right there when they turn for home for a barn that went 5 for the last 13 (38%, \$2.18 ROI) with last-out winners in the second start after the claim. **STAY IN TUNE** broke quickly, was hustled hard to get close to the pace, but couldn't step with Last Gift, wound up in the pocket, was urged along on the turn, then tried hard for second while saving ground every step. This barn went 9 for the last 40 (23%, \$3.05 ROI) off the claim. TIPMANEE, listed as a Laurel vet scratch on 3/15, drops in class and sheds Lasix after facing Rerun Table, who hit the board in her next two starts with a 66 Beyer top.

>> RACE 8

1. PREACHA MEYERS

2. NEON BORDEAUX

3. AMY'S MUSIC

PREACHA MEYERS gets a distance test as he seeks his fourth consecutive victory. Tracked from in between horses at Parx last time, found a nice split three wide at the three-sixteenths pole, and always found a bit more in the final furlong. Expect good early speed for a barn that went 4 for the last 10 (40%, \$2.06 ROI) with last-out winners moving from sprint to dirt route. Hazlewood lands here instead of **NEON BORDEAUX**, who was listed as an Aqueduct vet scratch (sick) on 4/25. Broke awkwardly in a 10-furlong heat in New York, then was wired in a slow-paced race where they ran 1-2-3 around the track. The winner then placed in two stakes races with Beyers of 97 and 92. Late-runner needs some pace help for a barn that went 7 for the last 30 (23%, \$2.22 ROI) with horses returning from 61 to 120-day layoffs. **AMY'S MUSIC** stretches out in distance and steps up in class after scoring over muddy going over only two rivals. This barn went 3 for 11 (27%, \$2.25 ROI) between 4/10 and 5/15.

>> RACE 9

1. DARTY TIME

2. ENJOYING

3. DANDY VANDY

DARTY TIME broke outward in her lone turf appearance, then pulled her way up to prompt outside the favored fourth-finisher. Eventually got the better of that foe after an extended battle, but couldn't fend off two next-out winners (Cougar Cocktail repeated in a first-level allowance with a 78 Beyer). Her speed plays well after a dirt prep. **ENJOYING** broke well over Gulfstream Tapeta, then was outpaced to the back along the rail. Made an inside bid, was on hold behind rivals on the second turn, split foes, and finished evenly without threatening. The winner then ran third in the Honey Ryder Stakes on turf with a 78 Beyer. Big class drop, but must avoid being outsprinted as she cuts back in distance. Breezed a solo half at Fair Hill on 5/16 for a barn that went 13 for the last 46 (28%, \$2.11 ROI) when moving from maiden special weight to maiden claiming. **DANDY VANDY** was wired by a 72-1 shot over yielding going in her final start of 2025. Broke outward slightly, tracked four-to-three wide, raced three wide and in between entering the second turn, then only finished evenly while changing to her left lead. The fifth-finisher hit the board in her next two with stereo 64 Beyers. Must prove her mettle at this shorter trip. Hazlewood lands here instead of Ithadtobebllu. **KNOCK KNOCK** faced three other debut runners in her lone turf start. Tracked slightly off the rail at the back, split foes, and got second. The winner hit the board in her next two starts with Beyers of 64 and 71. **SADIE'S HOLIDAY** is out of stakes-winning

turf router Patsy's Holiday (91 turf Beyer). CRAB MENTALITY drops after facing Best Girl Magic, who next scored a Turfway maiden special weight with a 63 Beyer.

KALI'S KEYS – by Kali Francois

Race 9: #2 Ithadtobebalu

When it comes to the only two turf starts this one has had - well, it's a tale of two different trips. A classic angle of a pattern change with the room at the route to give this one confidence and a competitive edge fixed a lot of things. Now the big question: coming back to sprint? Never fear, for those who have forgotten our second wire finish. The dam was an out-and-out sprinter, coming from off the pace. Don't worry guys, it's there. And of that matter, this one already got the right idea of coming off of mid pack from two races ago.

MACK'S FACTS – by Mackenzie Pfeiffer

R1: Barbed Wire Barbie made a strong showing on debut, behind a gate-to-wire winner with the pedigree to fit. Second out should show similar results here. Truly an Honor could drift up a bit, she hasn't rated easily in recent outings, perhaps sprinting will let her have her way.

R2: Rebelka faced a very impressive Costa Linda on debut, a respectable second to improve off of today. Have a look at Gypsy Lullaby in the paddock, while the mare did not race, the 2nd dam was a multiple graded stakes placed dirt sprinter.

R3: I try to forgive Cha Cha Chukka, who wasn't able to work much of a trip while cutting back, the added ground should suit her well here. Demand value on Bella Estrela, she has shown ability but hasn't been able to capitalize on that in recent outings.

R4: Speed cutting back should work well for Hylla, who also continues to find class relief. The inner post should help her clear early. I'll be curious to get eyes on debut runner Ghasel, a first time starter out of a multiple stakes winning mare.

R5: Hurrah impressed on debut for a barn who generally improves with experience, enough for me to try and beat a short favorite here.

R6: Emma Mermaid recovered after having every reason to quit last out, whether we find ourselves on turf or dirt, she looks to be figuring things out quickly while sticking to the level.

R7: Probable Angle looks like a wet track specialist based on her two career wins. First off the claim and a zippy bullet warrant consideration here. Nonetheless, Last Gift looks the one to beat, an impressive 6x winner, and holds the highest Beyer top on the dirt.

R8: Without a clear pace player, Preacha Meyers may be forced to clear early and take charge. If his recent form holds true, he could take them gate-to-wire. Straight to Water impressed when trying 2-turns in his 3-back effort, he looks to make it 2/2 for the distance, and Majorca certainly has flattered his form.

R9: Dandy Vandy looks well positioned for her return, a \$34,000 digital sale purchase and currently offered for \$35,000 in today's race. Her efforts with class relief look competitive amongst the group. Should things come off the turf, Sadie's Holiday has a family to suggest she could handle the main track, 4/4 half siblings were winners on the dirt.

TODAY'S HOT TRAINER STATS

RACE 2

#5 - Engage At Will

Trainer: John Salzman Jr.

Second-Out Maidens, 2-Year-Olds, Dirt: 6 for 21 (29%, \$2.74 ROI)

RACE 3

#4 - Princess Clemmie

Trainer: Suzanne Stettinius

First After 180-365 Days, Turf: 5 for 20 (25%, \$2.34 ROI)

RACE 4

#2 - Hylla

Trainer: Jamie Ness

First After Claim: 11 for 32 (34%, \$2.02 ROI)

#5 - She's a Canny Lass

Trainer: Keri Brion

Second-Out Maidens: 5 for 21 (24%, \$2.11 ROI)

RACE 5

#1 - Light de Night

Trainer: Jorge Duarte Jr.

Between 11/2 and 5/6: 11 for 42 (26%, \$2.25 ROI)

#9 - Spresso Mar

Trainer: Madison Meyers

First-Time Starters: 5 for 25 (20%, \$4.77 ROI)

RACE 7

#2 - Stay In Tune

Trainer: Kieron Magee

First After Claim: 9 for 40 (23%, \$3.05 ROI)

#4 - Last Gift

Trainer: Anthony Farrior

Last-Out Winners, Second After Claim: 5 for 13 (38%, \$2.18 ROI)

#6 - Probable Angle

Trainer: Daniel McKenzie

First After Claim, Dirt: 4 for 14 (29%, \$2.53 ROI)

RACE 8

#1 - Neon Bordeaux

Trainer: Rick Dutrow Jr.

First After 61 to 120 Days: 7 for 30 (23%, \$2.22 ROI)

#2 - Amy's Music

Trainer: Phil Capuano

Between 4/10 and 5/15: 3 for 11 (27%, \$2.25 ROI)

#6 - Preacha Meyers

Trainer: Jamie Ness

Last-Out Winner, Sprint to Dirt Route: 4 for 10 (40%, \$2.06 ROI)

RACE 9

#4 - Enjoying

Trainer: Graham Motion

Maiden Special to Maiden Claiming; 13 for 46 (28%, \$2.11 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: Maiden Claiming 16K, 3-6YO (F), 5 ½ Furlongs, Turf

Other notes:

- As highlighted in the chart comment, #1 TRULY AN HONOR was rank in her most recent start and pulled the shoulder off Michael Sanchez for most of the journey. While her overall trip was fine and the effort not worthy of an upgrade, she showed every indication that sprinting on the turf will be her preferred game and therefore, we may well be able to expect improvement from her today. Note: don't think that the mentions of her steadying in the short comment mean that she had a bad trip – she had a fine trip, she was just very strong.
- #2 BARBED WIRE BARBIE failed to switch leads in the lane when running well on debut; seems she has room to step forward second out. Note: ignore the chart comment “hung” – she tried all the way to the wire but just couldn't get there.
- One of the slowest breakers you'll see, #14 BASHFUL BABY has consistently dwelt at the start and never beaten any of the 45 horses she's competed against out of the gate. That could again put her at a disadvantage if drawing in today.

Race 2: MSW, 2YO (F), 4 ½ Furlongs, Dirt

Other notes:

- #2 REBELKA broke on top, then lugged out a little and as a result lost the lead entering the turn on debut, conceding two places and dropping back further than ideal... she then finished evenly on her left lead to ~1/8 before finally switching leads and running back on for 2nd. Seems she has plenty of areas in which she can improve/step forward second out with blinkers on today.
- #6 SWEET BOURBON TEA made a premature lead change (to her right) while still on the turn on debut. She then ran evenly through the lane before galloping out with credit.

Race 3: Claiming 16K, 3YO+ (F), 1 1/16 Miles, Turf

Horse	Race	Trip	Note
#1 HOCKEY	Claiming 16k, LRL, 1M, Firm Turf, 05/01/26 – 3 rd	Pulled very hard pressing honest pace 3W to the far turn; just about held her position while 3W to ¼; came 4W into the stretch, then stayed on very willingly to the wire despite having been put in a little tight between foes ~1/8 pole.	She did well to stay on for 3rd in this race and do best of the leading trio after over-racing early and having been caught wide on both turns – UPGRADE. An inside post could help her settle better, save more ground, and step forward today.
#3 CHA CHA CHUKKA	Claiming 16k, LRL, 1M, Firm Turf, 05/01/26 – 6 th	Stalked honest pace between foes in the 2P to the far turn; held position under pressure racing to into the lane, then steadied shortly after entering the stretch, losing a little momentum; regrouped and came back under a ride shortly after, then tried to slip through a narrow gap between foes ~1/16 but was shut off and had to take up significantly; from there, she was essentially eased.	A truly brutal stretch run, she'd almost certainly have gone close (quite possibly beating #1 HOCKEY) with a clean trip. We can essentially toss this effort and expect much more from her given a cleaner trip today.
#7 BELLA ESTRELLA	Claiming 16k, LRL, 1 1/16M, Firm Turf, 04/10/26 – 4 th	Tracked even pace from ~4L down on rail; crept closer under hand ride far turn, then steadied slightly when running up on heels ~1/8 pole; regathered herself quickly and then continued to fight gamely but did not have enough.	Her two-back effort before she was restless in the gate, reared and lost the jock at the break last time: She hardly lost any ground when steadying ~1/8 pole and had sat a good trip up to that point, so it's hard to upgrade her effort too much or say that she'd have won with a clean trip. But still, she did have her momentum slightly halted at an inopportune moment and considering it was her first start off the layoff, granted a clean trip, we should see more from her today.
Other notes:			
- None.			

Race 4: Maiden Claiming 12.5K, 3YO (F), 5 ½ Furlongs, Dirt**Other notes:**

- #2 HYLLE simply went too fast in front for the 7F distance over a 'good' listed dirt track at Colonial two back, then took pressure every step of the way when forming part of a contested pace at Keeneland last time. 7F seemingly stretches her as it is, and both of those recent race scenarios certainly didn't help her in trying to stay the distance. Feel 5 1/2F will be much more up her street as she debuts for Ness today.
- #3 MODERNIS SILVER was really knocked around at the start last time, then pulled hard in behind the leaders before stopping fast on the turn going a mile. Although she'll still need to improve, a cleaner break and cut back in trip can see her step back in the right direction today.
- Not sure why the chart comment regarding #5 SHE'S A CANNY LASS' debut says that she was in traffic first turn because she just simply wasn't... she sat a perfectly fine trip but offered little. Returns off layoff with Lasix added today.

Race 5: Maiden Claiming 35K, 3-6YO (F), 5 ½ Furlongs, Turf

Horse	Race	Trip	Note
#1 LIGHT DE NIGHT	Maiden Claiming 25k, LRL, 5 1/2F, Firm Turf, 11/01/25 – 2 nd	Bumped start, then steadied slightly shortly after; chased honest pace from ~6L back 3-4W into turn; crept closer under hold as field bunched but then found herself on heels ~3/8 and had to steady; dropped back off rivals racing to the top of the lane, then came 6W into stretch when ~7L back; stayed on evenly on left lead to ~1/8 pole, then kicked in the afterburners and flew down the outside but had too much to do.	While accepting that she had a good pace setup, this effort is still deserving of an UPGRADE owing to her troubled start and her steadying on the far turn; she finished full of run and if ready off the bench, can surely improve with Lasix added.

Other notes:

- #6 ROCK TALK did not handle the kickback at all when making her debut sprinting on the dirt on debut as she climbed and dropped herself out of the contest. We should not judge her ability on that effort; she can surely offer more today.

Race 6: Maiden Claiming 16K, 3-6YO (F), 5 ½ Furlongs, Turf

Horse	Race	Trip	Note
#5 GOTTA BE DA SHOES	Maiden Claiming 16k, LRL, 5 1/2F, Good Turf, 11/08/25 – 5 th	Chased hot pace on rail from ~8-10L back into the turn, then had a rival back very quickly into her, forcing her to take up very sharply, completely stopping her momentum and knocking her back multiple lengths; regathered stride ~5/16, then resumed her pursuit of the leaders; turned for home ~14L off the lead, then rallied very nicely through the lane, making up almost 10L to just miss 4 th .	Although she had plenty of pace to run at, this effort is still deserving of big UPGRADE due to the significant trouble she encountered on the turn. She did remarkably well to finish as close as she did and if ready off the layoff today, she'll require a close look. Note: her two-back effort was similarly as disastrous and also deserves an UPGRADE.

Other notes:

- The chart comment correctly highlights how #1 EMMA MERMAID had to steady a little entering the turn last time, but it really wasn't a severe steady and she didn't lose any momentum or ground; we should not upgrade her effort. Still, she ran well closing into a pace that did not come apart and she's deserving of respect today.
- #6 FORTY SEVEN SMOKER sat a wide trip when finishing 3rd off the layoff last time. We can slightly mark up that effort and possibly expect more second out today.

Race 7: Claiming 20K, 3YO (F), 6 Furlongs, Dirt**Other Notes:**

- #4 LAST GIFT, #2 STAY IN TUNE, #3 PICHU and #6 PROBABLE ANGLE finished in that order when the four of them recently squared off on April 25. None of the four sat bad trips in that race and the race worked out as the betting suggested it would (LAST GIFT won as the 6/5 FAV, #2 STAY IN TUNE ran 2nd as the 2/1 second choice). However, it still might be worth placing an asterisk by that form as the race was run over a speed biased track, possibly aiding LAST GIFT as the wire winner while working against PROBABLE ANGLE and PICHU (who made a very early (too early) 3W rush from the rear entering and around the turn before flattening out). In other words, we shouldn't just simply assume that they're going to finish in that same order again today.
- Fitted with blinkers for her turf debut, #5 MY GIRL BACK HOME stepped forward with a very determined gate to wire win last time. If carrying that form back to the dirt with the blinkers retained today (first start with blinks on dirt), she should play a major role.

Race 8: N1X Allowance, 3YO+, 1 1/16 Miles, Dirt**Other notes:**

- A runner whose two best efforts have come closing into fast paces, #1 NEON BORDEAUX has not nearly had enough pace to run at in his last two starts and can seemingly offer more if things heat up in front today.
- #3 MISSOURI RIVER met trouble racing into the first turn at Parx last out, steadying off heels, bumping and stumbling which knocked him back a little. While this far from ideal, we can't completely use it as an excuse for his defeat as the 1/1 fav (off visuals anyway; maybe he knocked himself or something?) as it happened very early in the race and he recovered quickly into a nice position shortly after, from where he sat a comfortable trip. Even with a trouble-free trip today, he'll need to bounce back.
- #5 STRAIGHT TO WATER raced wider than ideal (6W) into the lane before staying on with credit last week; he might have finished a smidge closer if he'd saved more ground. Returns to two-turns – which saw him produce a career best the only time he tried it – today.
- #6 PREACHA MEYERS' last effort – a commanding win at Parx as the 3/5 fav – is borderline upgradable owing to the fact that he was forced to wait on the leaders' heels (when he'd ideally have been gathering steam and building up an advantage) from ~3/8 pole into the lane. He quickened nicely between foes when in the clear through the stretch and may have won by further if he'd gotten out earlier. Note: there was a strong closer bias present this day, but it didn't have much of an impact on this evenly run race that featured a tightly bunched field.

Race 9: Maiden Claiming 35K, 3-6YO (F), 5 ½ Furlongs, Turf

Horse	Race	Trip	Note
#2 ITHADTOBEBLU	Maiden Claiming 16k, LRL, 1 1/16M, Firm Turf, 04/25/26 – 2 nd	Pressed honest pace between foes in the 2P to far turn; dismissed of pace rivals and opened up a clear lead racing into the lane; turned for home ~2L up, then stayed on gamely despite wandering around a little to the wire but could not hold off the eventual winner who saved ground while closing.	She only just missed (to a 'perfect trip' winner) despite having sat close to an honest pace – between foes, which is frequently a difficult spot to be in – that set up well for closers – it's easy to argue that she was best in here and her effort is deserving of a small PACE UPGRADE. She showed the right attributes to carry this form to 5 1/2F too.
#8 DARTY TIME	Maiden Claiming 35k, AQU, 6 1/2F, Fast Dirt, 03/29/26 – 2 nd	Traveled well setting fast pace in front; opened up while lugging out a little turn; straightened for the drive ~4-5L in front, then ran gamely to the wire but was collared ~1/16 pole and settled grudgingly for 2 nd .	Although beaten as the 8/5 fav, this was still a very commendable effort off the layoff. She set fast fractions (22.70, 45.94) for the class level/distance that set things up well for the winner and did well to hang around as long as she did. This effort is deserving of a PACE UPGRADE; if stripping fitter second off the bench back at 5 1/2F, she should play a role.

Other notes:

- #3 DANDY VANDY (FR) sat a slightly wider than ideal trip when last seen going two turns at Delaware. Returns off layoff and cuts right back in trip today. Note: she didn't particularly show any indications that she'd be better sprinting.
- The chart comment correctly highlights how #6 FAR AWAY EYES was in a little tight/briefly steadied ~1/2 in her last turf start which resulted in her dropping a long way off the pace early. While she ultimately ended up with too much to do and ran with credit to pick up 4th, it's still tough to upgrade her effort because she never had to properly check or have her momentum stopped, and it was almost like the rider was intentionally restraining her well off the hot pace into the turn. More, the pace strongly favored closers, and the winner was never that far in front of her (winner was 8 3/4L off the pace at first call). Returns off layoff today.
- #7 CRAB MENTALITY put herself at a disadvantage when breaking very slowly in a detached last on debut last year. A sharper break should see her offer more as she returns to action off the bench today.

Horses to Follow**R1: TRULY AN HONOR (5/1 ML)**

TRULY AN HONOR has been giving herself little chance of staying route trips with blinkers on recently, doing too much too early and effectively pulling her own chance away in the opening stages. The cutback to 5 1/2 furlongs today could see her in a much better light now that she's found her friends at the maiden 16k level, and any step forward should make her very competitive in the opener. Strengthening the case further, Trombetta has struck at 24% over the last year when cutting turf routers back to sprints (4-for-17; 65% ITM, \$3.94 ROI).

R3: CHA CHA CHUKKA (3/1 ML)

CHA CHA CHUKKA was beaten just over three lengths last time despite enduring a brutal stretch run and not being persevered with late once her chance had effectively gone. A cleaner trip today and another 1/16 of a mile to work with should help her make amends in today's third.

R8: PREACHA MEYERS (7/5 ML)

Bidding to make it four in a row following a better-than-looks hat-trick-securing victory at Parx last time, the ultra-consistent PREACHA MEYERS looks the controlling speed in a paceless eighth and could take plenty of pegging back under Hazlewood.

FUTURE HORSES TO WATCH

BETTER WATCH IT *(Entered at FAIR HILL – SUN 5/24, Race 1)*

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.

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.

CLEARLY SOPHIA

Trainer: Michael Gorham

Last Race: April 10, Race 6

Finish: 3rd by 1 1/2

Away from the gate with speed, then drafted back off the speed of eventual winner Erice. Chased willingly on the turn, and kept trying with a slight shift in mid-stretch. Should move forward in her second start of the year.

LOVELIEST

Trainer: Eddie Kenneally

Last Race: April 17, Race 7

LYUDMILA *(Breezed 5F - 1:01.80 at LRL on 5/16)*

Trainer: Justin Nixon

Last Race: Nov. 21, 6th race

Finish: 1st by 6

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.

SUJO *(Breezed 4F - :48.20 at TAM on 2/22)*

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.

KISS THE RING *(Breezed 4F - :50.00 at KEE on 4/19)*

Trainer: Jesus Cruz

Last Race: March 20, Race 3

Finish: 4th by 6 1/2

Caught a pretty strong field for his second lifetime start, and was bumped shortly after the start after breaking slowly. Tracked outside, tried to advance in between rivals, but flattened out in the stretch. Might need a class dip into state-sired company, and has enough pedigree to appreciate more distance.

DISCO RULES

Trainer: Flint Stites

Last Race: April 24, 9th race

Finish: 8th by 6 3/4

Class drop might be in order after filly tired badly in a first-level allowance sprinting on the grass. She was bumped during the opening furlong while pressing the winner from the rail before giving way. She is quick from the gate, and that speed would play well at a lower class level.

ROCKER ROLLER (*Breezed 4F - :51.00 at LRL on 5/15*)

Trainer: Brittany Russell

Last Race: April 17, Race 3

Finish: 3rd by 9 1/2

City of Light filly wasn't away the best from the rail draw in her career debut, saved ground in midpack, then never threatened along the inside. Think she gained a good amount of experience from this effort, and she acts like she'll appreciate longer distances.

Finish: 3rd by 7 1/2

Raced in between horses for most of the way, was lightly bumped from his inside entering the turn and briefly raced on hold behind foes, angled three wide into the stretch, and churned on for a minor placing. Not sure he cared for the deep, sealed track that afternoon, and deserves another chance around two turns against allowance competition.

MAGICAL MONDAYS

Trainer: Tim Woolley

Last Race: May 3, 7th race

Finish: 3rd by 3

Returning from an October layoff, this 4-year-old was wired in a slow-paced race controlled throughout by the two pacesetters. He was the only horse making up meaningful ground after racing wide through the second turn and into the stretch.

JOCKEY CALLS

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

Race 1 - Yedsit Hazlewood: #2 - Barbed Wire Barbie; #4 - Half a Deck >>> **Hazlewood rides BARBED WIRE BARBIE**

Race 2 - Xavier Perez: #3 - Paris by Night; #4 - The Stork Club >>> **Perez rides PARIS BY NIGHT**

Race 3 - Taylor Kingsley: #2 - Skittliedat; #4 - Princess Clemmie >>> **Kingsley rides PRINCESS CLEMMIE**

Race 3 - Jorge Ruiz: #6 - Dream Leader; #8 - Queen Rocket >>> **Ruiz rides QUEEN ROCKET**

Race 5 - Jorge Ruiz: #1 - Light de Night; #5 - Nattie's Boss >>> **Ruiz rides LIGHT DE NIGHT**

Race 6 - Raul Mena: #2 - Golden Sovereign; #5 - Gotta Be Da Shoes >>> **Mena rides GOLDEN SOVEREIGN**

Race 8 - Yedsit Hazlewood: #1 - Neon Bordeaux; #6 - Preacha Meyers >>> **Hazlewood rides PREACHA MEYERS**

Race 9 - Yedsit Hazlewood: #2 - Ithadtobebllu; #3 - Dandy Vandy >>> **Hazlewood rides DANDY VANDY**

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

A recap of SATURDAY, MAY 16 action at Laurel Park. Visit theracingbiz.com for John Piasek's FREE full analysis of today's Laurel card.

Race 1: Yedsit Hazlewood gave **Boujee Bubblez** a perfect ride. He rated his mount off of early leader Sally's Gold on the rail, then angled her off the inside at the top of the stretch. From there, she had enough left to hold off the late rally of favored Epic Style.

Race 2: Freeze the Fire and Call Me Andy battled for the early lead, which set it up perfectly for **Wickeddivine**. He was taken off the pace after flashing brief speed, then made his move at the top of the lane and kicked on for his third consecutive victory. Freeze the Fire ran the best of the duelers. He finished second, 2 ¾ lengths clear of Call Me Andy. Uncle Cat made what looked like a strong move at the top of the stretch, but flattened out and was third.

Race 3: This race officially took 1:35.99, but it was over within the first few seconds. Yedsit Hazlewood established early control with **Limo**, set moderate fractions, and couldn't be caught from there. Master Sommelier, the slight 5-2 pace, chased Limo throughout but proved no match. He was caught for second by Naabaahii, who closed with interest after saving ground.

Race 4: The first stakes race of the day, the Skipat Stakes, went to **Striker Has Dial**. She set the pace on the rail, outrunning the speedy Texan Modo in the process. Benedetta gave a run at the leader in the last eighth, but Strike Has Dial had too much to give and won at 7-1, the biggest price in the field. Favored Passage East had no punch until it was too late and finished third.

Race 5: **I Love Giraffes** scratched from Friday's Hilltop Stakes to run here. It ended up being a smart move. She raced close to the pace off the rail while showing pent-up energy. Paco Lopez asked her for run at the top of the stretch, and she delivered. Mambo Queen came calling late but was ultimately beaten a neck. The winner was the only one who was near the pace and hung around. The second, third, fourth, and fifth-place finishers were tenth, eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth at the three-quarters point.

Race 6: Score one for the locals! Last year's Maryland Million Nursery winner, **Big Cuddle**, made his two-turn debut a winning one in the Sir Barton Stakes. He rated off heavily favored early leader Final Story in the two-path and collared the leader with about three-sixteenths of a mile to go. Final Story fought back gamely, but Big Cuddle had more to give and won by a half-length. Those who saw Gary Capuano and Yedsit Hazlewood dominate all winter and kept their trust on a national stage were rewarded with a \$12.80 win mutuel.

Race 7: Parx superstar Shane's Wonder, in his first start away from his home track, ran a big race in the Chick Lang Stakes. He established a clear early lead while setting sharp fractions and fought hard when 7-10 favorite **Obliteration** came calling. However, Obliteration proved too much and plenty left to give after his perfect trip. Shane's Wonder held second by a nose over Igniter.

Race 8: **Bring the Smoke** broke his maiden here in February in impressive fashion. So impressive, in fact, he was privately purchased and sent to Kentucky. He made his Laurel return a winning one, sitting a great stalking trip and punching on in the stretch to win the Maryland Sprint. Faust and Haileysfirstnotion both ran big races on the lead, holding on for second and third, respectively. Slight favorite Celtic Contender and Slam Notion had no closing kick.

Race 9: Once again, local connections got it done in the big spotlight. Graham Motion and Jorge Ruiz teamed up to win the James Murphy Stakes with **Turf Star**, who gobbled up ground and got up over perfect trip-sitting My Favorite Bird.

Race 10: Cruise the Nile, sent off as a heavy favorite in the Dinner Party Stakes, sat off of early leader Harrow in the two-path and looked ready to kick away on the far turn. However, he had no punch when asked and ended up third. **Fort Washington**, last year's winner, hit the front at the eighth pole and held on over a surging A Bourbon for Toby.

Race 11: The Gallorette Stakes completely fell apart; the horses who were sixth, seventh, and eighth on the far turn finished first, second, and third. **Warming** had the best closing kick of all, as she hit the front at the eighth pole under John Velazquez and held clear from there.

Race 12: Outlaw Kid outkicked **Chasing Liberty** last out in the King Leatherbury Stakes. In the Jim McKay Turf Sprint Stakes, the tables were turned. Irad Ortiz found an opening on the inside with Chasing Liberty and moved his mount through. Outlaw Kid, who raced in the center of the track, also closed well, but the ground lost made the difference, and Chasing Liberty ultimately defeated him by a nose. The ten horses in here were separated by only 4 ¾ lengths on the wire.

Race 13: Taj Mahal, who went off as the highest-priced Preakness Stakes favorite in history at 4.70-1, set fast early fractions on the rail, with **Napoleon Solo** just off his flank. Taj Mahal stopped badly on the final turn, Napoleon Solo inherited the lead, and fended off the determined challenge of Iron Honor to put his name in the history books. Despite the hot pace, none of the closers looked like a threat to win at any point.

Race 14: Paco Lopez didn't sit on his laurels (if you will) after winning the Preakness. Less than an hour later, he won aboard **Grant the Great** in gate-to-wire style. Love Yourself checked twice on the turn, and while he was no match for Grant the Great, outkicked the rest for second.

PAST TRACK TRENDS

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 (speed lean)

Feb. 6 – Fair

Feb. 12 – CLOSERS BIAS

Feb. 13 – Fair (slight speed lean)

Feb. 14 – Fair

Feb. 15 – Fair

Feb. 20 – Fair

Feb. 21 – Fair

Feb. 22 – Fair

Feb. 27 – Fair

Feb. 28 – Fair

Mar. 1 – Fair

Mar. 6 – Fair (slight outside lean)

Mar. 7 – SPEED BIAS

Mar. 8 – Fair

Mar. 13 – SPEED BIAS (strong crosswind)

Mar. 15 – Fair

Mar. 20 – Fair

Mar. 21 – Fair (perhaps outside lean)

Mar. 22 – Fair (perhaps outside lean)

Mar. 27 – Fair

Mar. 28 – Fair

Mar. 29 – SPEED BIAS

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