

SANTA ANITA ANALYSIS**BY BRAD FREE****BEST BET: Mucho Bravo (6th race)****First Race: 1. Phantom Lover 2. Matlow 3. Whipstock**

With two good comeback sprints under his belt, PHANTOM LOVER is ready to stretch out and win. His even-paced running style should play well around two turns; he can tuck into a good trip positioned second behind likely pacesetter MATLOW. The latter is the speed of the field, returning from a three-month break with blinkers on, and running a route of ground for the first time. He should make the lead; his third-place finish last out was validated with the fourth- and fifth-place finishers returned to win. WHIPSTOCK finished in front of the top choice two starts back, then finished second again in a turf route. ADMISSION figures off his big runner-up finish two starts back.

Second Race: 1. My Boy Luke 2. Dancing Joy 3. Trueno

MY BOY LUKE drops in class to \$12.5k non-winners of two after finishing nowhere in a strong starter-allowance marathon at Fairplex Park. Runner-up by nose against better company two starts back, he is the obvious favorite. DANCING JOY finished behind the top choice when they met two months ago. However, JOY has more speed than the favorite, and his gas might carry farther on dirt than it did on synthetic. TRUENO has run races that put him in the hunt.

Third Race: 1. Hakuchi 2. Bella Swan 3. Tenacious Tina

An interesting pick-six sequence filled with large fields begins with a \$32k filly-mare claimer on the hill and a possible upset with route-to-sprint HAKUCHI. Her U.S. sprint debut three starts back was better than looked; in two subsequent route races she set the pace and weakened. Now she cuts back to a sprint and switches to grass. Both her wins in Argentina were turf sprints; all three starts in the U.S. suggest this shorter distance is up her alley. Tab for a minor upset. BELLA SWAN, from Europe, drops into a claimer for the first time in the U.S. She also has a pressing style around two turns that suggests this sprint distance is good. TENACIOUS TINA is a proven turf sprinter wheeling back two weeks after a good runner-up finish vs. Calbred allowance foes at the Fair. AMBITONESS is 4-for-12 on grass and will roll late. She finished third in two Polytrack routes in summer.

Fourth Race: 1. Sabe 2. Ello Guv 3. Danger Ranger

If he breaks with the field, 2-year-old maiden-claimer SABE can lead this seven-furlong race gate to wire. He broke last from the rail in his most recent at Del Mar, zoomed to the lead, set the pace to midstretch and weakened to fourth. It was an improved second start by the gray, who figures to make the front. Come catch him. ELLO GUV also was compromised last time by a poor takeoff. He broke slow and steadied, and found himself in last. He saved ground thereafter, swung outside for the drive, finished with run for second and galloped out in front. It was a good debut by the gelding, who ran as if seven furlongs will be fine. DANGER RANGER will be closing ground, while second-time starter DANGERS DUO looms the upsetter for trainer Jim Cassidy and jockey Mike Smith, who scored a \$34.80 upset Saturday with a 2-year-old debut maiden (Your Special Day).

Fifth Race: 1. Mr. Saturdaynight 2. Luv Dragon 3. North Fork

MR. SATURDAYNIGHT stretches back to two turns in a \$10k claimer that does not have much pace. The 7-for-21 gelding finished well sprinting last time and was claimed; this is his first start for Roberto Diodoro. He can win with a front-running/pace-pressing trip. LUV DRAGON misfired last time at Fairplex, but he has rebounded following subpar efforts. His third-place finish two starts back in a fast race at Del Mar would make him tough. And like the top choice, DRAGON has enough tactical speed to be forwardly placed. NORTH FORK was once good enough; his most recent was a step forward. BOULDER CREEK was banging heads with \$16k to \$25k claimers in summer. He returns near the bottom.

Sixth Race: 1. Mucho Bravo 2. Panther's Claw 3. Personalitary

MUCHO BRAVO drops from maiden-30 to maiden-20 and adds blinkers while stretching to two turns following a good comeback at Del Mar. He split the field at seven furlongs; his running style suggests two turns is ideal. The best horse in the field, he looks like the most probable winner on the card. Trouble-prone PANTHER'S CLAW finished nowhere in four starts against special-weight maidens. He tries dirt and bottom-level maiden-claimers for the first time. PERSONALITARY pressed and cracked in his first since changing trainers. He can improve second start for Jack Carava. SIDEPOCKET KID gets in light with seven-pound apprentice Eswan Flores, while also racing at the bottom for the first time.

Seventh Race: 1. Holladay Road 2. Bolinas 3. Surplus

Route-to-sprint HOLLADAY ROAD missed by only a length last out while trying to weave through traffic in the stretch of a one-mile Polytrack race for Calbred allowance runners. He shortens to a sprint, and while he figures to be outrun early, he will be rolling late in a race that sets up for an off-the-pace runner. BOLINAS went too fast out front last time when he opened up a ridiculous six-length lead before tiring to second. He previously finished a closing third in two five-furlong turf sprints at Del Mar, and should like this six and a half-furlong trip. SUPRPLUS wired maidens with a big number (92 Beyer). As a son of In Excess, he should like grass. SAMMYS A RUNNIN will be running late, while front-runners FUN AND FROLIC and MINT HUMOR add gas to the pace scenario.

Eighth Race: 1. Wanted Poster 2. Red Dwarf 3. Trando's Tremor

WANTED POSTER returns from a four-month layoff as a first-time gelding, adding blinkers, and dropping to the bottom for the first time. All systems go in the finale of a difficult card with large fields. Pick six carryover into Friday? RED DWARF has lost as the favorite all four starts, and could go favored again here. Although he finished third last time, he actually ran well setting a fast pace before getting colared. TRANDO'S TREMOR got banged around at the start of his debut, but finished with run to split the field in a promising debut. With a clean trip, he figures squarely in the hunt.