Handicapping Analysis
Sun April 21st, 2024

Howard's Late Pick 4

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 5:00 PM CST

Analysis by Howard Kravets

Race 6: 8 - 7 - 9

Pick 4 Ticket: 7,8,9 / 1,2,3,6 / 1,3 / 1,3,4,5 ($48)

The last time **#8 Time Heist (5-2)** hit the track, he was super-impressive in victory. The running line doesn't even tell the whole story. Giles rode with the utmost confidence, didn't even ask the horse until the far turn, and blew by the competition with ease despite being on the wrong lead most of the stretch. A repeat of that effort will make him tough here.

Race 7: 6 - 1 - 2

I believe this race has a chance to fall apart. If it does, there are two logical choices, the #2 and #6. I'll go with the horse that I believe will be the higher price of the two, **#6 Silent Sunday (9-2)**. He has races on the dirt back in California that would be competitive here, and his synthetic starts have been on par with most of this field. The heavy favorite, Richiesonaroll, will take a ton of money. But he's hard to trust if he doesn't have the lead, and there's no guarantee that will happen with the presence of the #3. This is a very important race for the Illinois Derby Contest...if the #1 loses, the leaderboard will change dramatically in my opinion.

Race 8 (Illinois Derby): 1 - 3 - 4

Welcome back, Illinois Derby!! The $200k 9-furlong race for 3yo's brings together a small but competitive field. The winner will get an automatic bid to the Preakness Stakes, the 2nd leg of the Triple Crown. There is enough early speed in this race to set up for a mid-pack / closing-type runner, and therefore I'll go with the **#1 Real Men Violin (3-1)** for jockey Reylu Guiterrez and trainer Ken McPeek. At his best, I feel he is the most talented horse, although he has not shown that speed in his last two races. It should be mentioned that the jock just wrapped up on him in mid-stretch in the Louisiana Derby, so the losing margin was exaggerated. That being said, it wasn't a good effort. However, since that race, he's recorded two solid works and Reylu was on him in that last work. If he runs back to any of his races at the end of 2023, I believe he'll beat this field. #3 Raguel for Brendan Walsh should improve with some time off and blinkers on, and #4 Woodcourt has run two competitive races back-to-back. This is a fun rendition of the Illinois Derby.

Race 9: 5 - 1 - 4

#5 Gimme the Candy (3-1) will try and wire the field again today to close out the card. He's very quick and will be gunning for the lead for sure. There is other speed in here, so Gimme will have to be at his best. In addition, he has to stretch out to 6f, so he's no sure thing. However, many horses in here do not like to pass others, so maybe the speed of the speed will prevail.