Handicapping Analysis
Sat May 25th, 2024

Howard's Late Pick 4

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:50 PM CST

Analysis by Howard Kravets

Race 5: 9 - 5 - 8

Late Pick 4 ticket: 3,4,5,6,8,9 / 3,5 / 5,6,8,10 / 4,5

The opening leg of the Late P4 is a $20k maiden claimer on the lawn. Despite the fact there are some interesting firsters from high-end stables (Rivelli and Block), I'll choose the experience of **#9 Righteous Freedom for Roussel (5-2)**. I don't like the 0-for-8 record on the win end, but he's been given a bit of a break, been working well, and will be flying the lane. I would take too low a price on him however, he's not easy to trust. Big-time spread race for me horizontally.

Race 6: 3 - 5 - 7

Trainer Jon Arnett is having a solid meet so far, hitting at 24%. Perhaps his win percentage will increase with my top choice, **#3 Blessed Anna (9-5)**. She finds a pretty soft field for an allowance race and won last time from the rail, beating some of her main competition today. A repeat effort of the last would get the job done again.

Race 7: 6 - 8 - 5

The classiest horses of the card match up in a nice allowance affair on the lawn in Race 7. I'll go with Block's **#6 Battle Scars (5-2)**, who's consistent if not spectacular. The 6yo has been rested up for this spot since the FG meet, puts blinkers on, and has a great closing kick. The problem is he often has too much ground to make up. Maybe the blinks will put him more into the game. I sort of wonder why the NY-bred is not racing in his home state vs. his own kind. Maybe he's just not good enough to compete on that tough circuit.

Race 8: 4 - 5 - 7

The finale is a two-horse race to me between top choice **#4 Sendmedowntheroad (5-2)** and #5 Sky Master, the ML-favorite. "Sendme" is now being trained by Rodriguez off the claim, and he's 19% this meet, so I'm not overly concerned about the switch off of Rivelli in this instance. He showed a lot of early speed for the level in his debut before fading to 4th. I'm expecting more stamina today and just don't trust the #5, who's dropping from the clouds to $6,250 from $62,500, 10 times less his sales price from the last time he ran. That's too big a red flag for me to pick on top.