

The Empire Report – Friday, April 12, 2024 – Race Analysis

RACE 1 – (1) NO DRAMA PLEASE may not have the greatest looking recent lines but he drops to a level where he's ultra-reliable, draws the pole, and looms the one to beat in the Friday opener. (4) STREET GOSSIP is still looking for that for that first win of the season – he steps up off a couple of nice tries, can probably be aggressive here, and should be a player from start to finish. (5) VALI HANOVER hasn't been "bad" in 2024 but he also hasn't been nearly as sharp as in '23 – his chances go way up if things get a bit hot up front, but you'd still want a "fair" price to use him on top here. (2) HUNTING AS is one of the more camera shy Yonkers competitors but he often races well enough for pieces – good one to use underneath. (7) QUIKSILVR BLUECHIP was dullish for a new barn last week but was also racing off a bad date – he does fit cheaper, and he also has to deal with the poor draw – may need to wait for a better spot. (6) JUST SHOW UP debuted for high profile connections last week but was extremely dull – looking for some better life before hopping in his team. (3) MUFASA AS seems headed in the wrong direction

RACE 2– (5) GOLDEN QUEST N was pretty good last week considering that she landed on a very tough trip, while racing off a bad date – she's having a terrific year, her barn is as strong as ever, and we'll give her the nod in this compact field. (3) MISS CHANTILLY N was 3 for 6 here last year, and she won her only local try in 2024 – returns sharp from NJ, and could have a big say. (1) OAXACAN DREAM N may prefer to be in a bit easier but her overall form is rock solid (for a barn going well) and the right trip could land her on the board. (4) DRAGONS LUCKY LADY doesn't get a ton of respect at the windows but she's held her form very well for some time, and could easily grab a nice chunk if things go her way. (2) TWIN B SUNKISSED tends to be a streaky mare, and her recent efforts suggest she's heading in the wrong direction (at the moment).

RACE 3 – Good race: (1) MAGICAL MAYA A was very good here on 3/8 but a bit disappointing in her next – rebounded with a nice try in her next (back up at Stga.) and now draws the pole for her Hilltop return – could offer some decent value in a pretty wide open affair. (3) FAVORITE BEACH wasn't at her best last week but her overall form in 2024 has been solid – could easily bounce back with a good one, and she does have a post edge over a few of the other main players. (5) UPTOWN HANOVER is normally ultra-consistent, making it tough to figure out if she's just been hurt by some bad spots lately, or has genuinely gone off form – suppose we'll get a clearer picture after tonight. (6) ULTIMATE SPEED raced very well to be 2nd last week, and has been consistently good all year – the draw is the only real knock. (4) GAME OF SHADOWS is putting together a solid year, holding form at levels higher than she's used to – an easy trip could help her pick up a decent piece. (7) HELLO YES HI raced big to be 2nd on 4/5, despite a month off after her qualifier (and no actual starts since December) – her last wasn't as sharp, but it's possible that she was hurt by being behind the tiring leader turning for home – regardless, she faces a tall task starting from all the way out here. (2) DEVILISH DREAMS just seems a bit below these right now

RACE 4 – (2) REC TIME has been a little lazy during the mile in her recent starts but then finishes up full of pace – there MAY be some action up front tonight, so perhaps she can make her late kick pay off...at a decent price. (7) FORGOT THEWALLET A made her first 2 U.S. starts here at Yonkers, was well backed each time and had excuses both times – she really got her act together at PcD, and ships in off 3 straight wins, the last being very impressive (pacing two :26.4 quarters) – may be able to overcome the draw and keep her streak alive at YR. (3) PEMBROKE SOUTHIE has been thriving all year for her new barn – she's won 4 of her 5 starts, and has a very real chance of taking another. (1) LUCKY ARTIST A looked like she was ready to go on a little tear but quickly tailed back off – can never count the classy 11YO out, but leaning towards a couple of others right now. (6) MISS DOTTIE MAE has been good for a while, but the poor draw may compromise her a bit tonight. (4) VILLAGE JADE has leveled off, and now has to move up in class – prefer others. (5) SUGAR BRITCHES was just distanced in her qualifier, pacing in 1:58.4 at The Swamp – not really sure how she's even qualified off that mile

RACE 5 – (2) TORRONE was well meant and heading for the top when he made a costly miscue here 2 back – he redeemed himself with last week's victory at Chester (\$2.10!), and lands in a spot where he can take another. (3) PC FREE WHEELING took advantage of both the class drop and perfect trip to grab the victory – she's very comfy at this level too, and could easily be part of the equation tonight, as well. (1) THE LAST CHAPTER started off the year in fine form, struggled after moving up too high in class but has been coming back around with the recent class drops – figures to be an up close player from start to finish. (6) WINDSONG PIONEER was taken off the gate last week but still was a decent 4th – his chances to be a big player go way up if he can leave the gate tonight, but he can

still grab a small share racing from behind, (5) WESLYNN CROWN was trapped for a long time behind an empty one last week, shaking free way too late to do any damage – chance to rally for a piece tonight, with better luck. (8) FOR A DREAMER fits beautifully with these, but yet another horrible post figures to compromise his chances once more. (4) BLUEBIRD JESSE has trouble beating lesser – prefer others. (7) VOYAGE TO PARIS looked good in her first 2 starts arriving from Ohio...but has gone the other way since then

RACE 6 – (7) IN THE SPOTLIGHT N has raced well here in the past, and vs. better than these – she has a qualifier and start under her belt (in NJ), and lands in a fairly soft spot for her first local try of the year – gets the nod, despite the draw. (3) FOND MEMORIES A has been facing Stga. stock that should make her a good fit here– she raced here a couple of times in 2023 and just missed one start in NW15000– look for a good mile tonight. (4) ROCKN PHILLY disappointed as the favorite 2 back (nothing new for her) but did make amends with a victory last week – she steps up a bit, but can still land a nice piece. (1) BIG BIG PLANS ships in for top shelf connections and did pick up a pair of 3rds locally at the end of 2023 – she hasn't WON a race since 2022, however, and would be tough to use on top at a fairly short price. (2) COMMANDER CATHY N rarely wins but she does a good job grabbing smaller pieces off easy trips...something she may be able to do tonight. (5) COWGIRL LILLY has been very consistent lately but she hasn't been able to win, and now moves up in class – another to consider for underneath. (8) HALLELUJAH HANO VER could be on the upswing, but the draw may leave her waiting for a better spot. (6) QUIET ASSURANCES seems a bit on the cheaper side.

RACE 7 – (4) ON HIGHER GROUND can be a legitimate Open player when on his best game – it was a little disappointing that he was unable to get by for the victory last week, but the winner happens to be on a pretty good streak of his own right now – another chance to get it right. (2) VINNY DE VIE sat the pocket last week, suddenly just lost a couple of lengths entering the stretch and was unable to make it back up, falling just short at the wire (which is how he was able to stay eligible to the class one more week) – very live player once more (and a better price tonight). (5) SEVENSHADESOFGREY is like a bit cheaper version of barnmate TACHYON (capable of BIG miles when sharp, but also prone to miscues and cold streaks) – he's very good right now, and a patient steer from Holland could see him have a big say at the end. (3) MAX has been finishing well recently – could be a notch below a couple of the top ones, but more than capable of grabbing a decent piece. (6) PARISO has done good work since arriving at YR, winning 2 of 3 and stuck cutting quick fractions on a night terrible for speed in the other – the post MAY slow her down a bit tonight, but it's hard to ever count a barn that's been winning at an insane 40% clip this year! (1) FULL RIGHTS could really use some class relief, but the good draw at least puts him in play for some minor spoils. (7) HOOLIE N HECTOR is still trying to find his best form – Post 7 isn't going to help his cause. (8) GRINDER's 2 wins this year have come on the lead, vs. easier – brutal spot for tonight

RACE 8 – (1) VENIER HANOVER has shown signs of being ready to deliver one of his BIG miles but keeps getting sidetracked by bad trips, posts, etc. – maybe he can strut his best stuff from the pole tonight? (3) JIMMY CONNOR B steps up a peg off last week's very easy victory but this level is well within his comfort zone too – very logical threat, but no value to be had on top (with that 7/5 ML price). (2) DIAMONDBEACH remains ever unpredictable, following up the jogburger from 2 back with last week's final turn miscue – if he behaves, he'll have a big chance to take home a big chunk. (6) ALWAYS ROCKIN has been picking up a steady stream of minor pieces vs. better – tonight's class drop will be appreciated, but his first tough post in a long time may offset that benefit. (4) MY CARBON COPY N was 0 for 17 here last year and probably on the cheaper side – his barn is going well, tough, so perhaps an easy trip can help him grab some minor spoils. (7) CAUGHTINALANDSLIDE is having trouble finding his best form so far in 2024 (his lone win was vs. cheaper, at PcD) – the draw obviously is an issue, as well. (5) ROCK CANDY looked well short last week in his first start in over a year

RACE 9 – (2) UP THE CREEK was a solid 2nd last week behind a winner that would probably go off at 1/10 in here – feels like a short priced winner to close out the Friday festivities. (4) THREE IN HEAVEN A has gotten away 7th in his last 5 races out of town – maybe this is a spot where he can be aggressive, and grab a nice piece? (3) THE REAL ONE had a useful effort after missing 2 months – the mega-classy 14YO will win a few more in his final season of racing- but maybe not tonight. (1) MIDNIGHT LIGHTNING seems cheap but several barnmates have been good lately – maybe he can use the rail to pick up a small share? (6) EMINEM HANOVER has a short little brush in him – if Holland can time it right, maybe he can land a small piece, at a big price? (7) SARANAC BLUE CHIP seems off form and draws poorly – inclined to pass, but will check the tote board first. (8) QUATRIN BLUE CHIP drops from 30s but the draw may offset that. (5) SOMEBEACH BARON has been struggling in Ohio all year