The Empire Report – Tuesday, April 9, 2024 – Race Analysis

RACE 1 – (7) MOONSHINE KISSES was a solid 2nd here behind COACHES CORNER on March 4th, with that line sandwiched between a couple of efforts with legitimate excuses – he returns off an easy Stga. win, and has faced (and beaten) much better than these in the past – gets the call, despite the draw. (1) POINTOMYGRANSON had an outstanding year in 2023 and is already off to a 10-5-3-2 start in ’24 – he was just re-claimed by a barn that just missed with him 2 back, and looms the major danger from the pole (2) YOROKOBI N raced super last week despite a very tough trip while up in class – he steps up another level, but the inside draw could offset that – chance to land in the exotics. (4) ROCK THE BELLES looked a bit sharper in his 3rd start off the layoff – we’ll see if he’s ready to get more involved, and maybe pick up a good piece. (5) KINGSVILLE seems to race a little differently from week to week – his best effort puts him in the hunt for a piece, but Brennan does opt to steer #1 tonight. (3) DUVAL STREET did good work at 2 and 3, including a few starts here at Yonkers – he’s been racing well in PA, but he moves to new connections for tonight and the barn has really been struggling lately – sticking with others, for now. (6) DOW NRIGHDELIICIOUS was an even 4th in his seasonal debut then scratched sick from his next – guessing he’ll be handled conservatively here. (8) BLANK STARE will look better with a class drop and better post next week

RACE 2 – (3) BADDITUDE crushed the 25s in her first local start, then was an excellent 2nd to a very sharp winner when bumping up to 50s last week– barn has been on fire at multiple tracks, and this mare deserves plenty of respect right now. (2) TWIN B ALLURE was stuck outside for both starts in this class but now gets major post relief – look for her to be a lot more involved this week…with a legitimate chance to be part of the equation. (1) IRON MISTRESS was racing off a qualifier (for a new barn) last week but still was a very good 3rd despite a tough trip – another live player in this well matched field. (4) ONDERFULBEACH may be a hair below a couple of the others right now but she’s a proven winner at this level, and hails for connections that can never be taken lightly - possibility. (6) COMMANDER CATHY N seems stuck on minor pieces these days and tonight figures to produce more of the same. (5) ON THE MONEY GB hit board in 6 of 9 starts this year but may be a bit ambitiously placed for $50K – leaning more towards others. (8) LA BELLA VITA N has done all good work since dropping in for the $50K tag but she lands Post 8 tonight while off a month, and that’s a tough hill to climb. (7) ROCKNROLL ANNIE lands outside after getting parked on 3/15, then scratched sick from her last

RACE 3 – (5) SAUBLE DELIGHTFUL returns to YR after 3 solid tries across the river – she’s remained consistent for some time now, and this $25K claiming level should suit her well – gets the narrow nod. (6) TERACITA re-qualified on Lasix after a month off, and drops down from the 50s for tonight – could be very dangerous…or may also have some issue…suppose we’ll learn more after tonight. (2) SPITTING IMAGE was able to get aggressive with the move inside last week and responded with a sharp win vs. a bit easier – she should be able to handle the move up to 25s, and could have a real say tonight. (1) JUST ROSAS LUCK comes back on short rest after a tough trip on Friday night – drops in for a tag, draws the pole, and seems like a logical one to include in exotics. (7) CALL MEQUEENBEE A is ok right now, but gets stuck with her 3rd straight 7 hole…and that will probably limit her to just a smaller piece. (4) CORAL BELLA seemed to finally be coming around but then made a break 2 back, and was a dull 3rd in her last – mixed feelings. (3) EXCITING TIMES A returns after a couple of nice tries in PA, but her local efforts have been less than stellar

RACE 4 – (5) ANOTHERMASTRPIECE N continues his climb up the ladder, looking to make it 3 in a row tonight – he faces some legitimate competition here, but seems sharp enough to continue his winning ways. (1) FAMILY RECIPES finished 2nd best chasing a sharp winner from the pocket last week – may be heading for a similar scenario here. (4) NAUTICAL HANOVER has been solid overall since returning from Canada though he did throw a bit of a dud last week – chance for a nice piece if he can bounce right back. (3) GINGRAS BEACH, perhaps coincidentally, has been very good since teaming up with his namesake – he may be pushing it a bit up at this level, but he still seems capable of pulling down a decent chunk (with a good trip). (7) SPEED MAN N picked up 2nds in his last pair but the classy 10YO wasn’t as strong at the end as he could have been – might be a bit vulnerable tonight starting from out here. (6) ORLANDO BLUE A probably prefers to be in a little cheaper, and the bad draw isn’t going to help his cause. (2) RULE OF LAW gets the same change in connections as DUVAL STREET (Race 1) – perhaps see how THAT one does, and reserve judgment on this guy? (8) SOUTHBEEHANOVER is the outsider, both literally and figuratively
RACE 5 – (1) PLEASURE SEEKER had a good stint here in February, picking up 2 wins and 2 seconds – she was hurt by a couple of bad posts after that but returns from Monti off last week’s first over score, and catches an overall modest bunch – deserves top billing, especially reuniting with Brennan. (5) AINTNOHOLLABACKGRL picked up her first win of the season with last week’s sharp first over score – a live trip makes her a threat to take another, assuming she’s as good tonight. (3) PRINCESS ARONA looked like a winner 2 back then hung brutally through the lane – she seemed headed for an easy 2nd in her last but once again failed to dig in through the stretch, ending up 3rd instead – tough one to endorse on top as the ML favorite, but certainly a chance for a decent piece. (2) BETTOR B SAWYER lost all chance when shuffled last week but did rally back for a check once free in the lane – draws well, and that could help her land somewhere in the exotics tonight. (8) BLUEBIRD GRAF won 4 of her first 6 starts here this year but had no luck in her last pair after being claimed – gets an important class drop tonight, but also gets stuck with Post 8 – ok for longshot fans. (4) LINCOLNS GIRL N was sharp for a few starts but didn’t look good even before that break on 3/26, then was scratched last week – a little iffy at the moment. (6) ACEFOURTYFOUR ALEX just hasn’t found her stride in her first 5 starts this year. (7) SUNSET SOPH will have trouble reaching

RACE 6 – (8) SKIFROMTHETOP IR was sent off at 3/5 last week and despite having everything go his way, was just an “ok” winner – it’s tempting to go against him from Post 8 tonight but it’s possible that he just didn’t really care for the off going last week, and may have also got a bit lazy on the clear lead – gets the tepid vote. (6) IDEAL PAR hurt his chances to be closer last week when he came out behind a retreating foe, and was forced wide to the final turn – he’s capable of better tonight, and should be a square price. (7) LOOTABLE is just 1 for 36, but does have speed and a pilot not afraid to send one – use in exotics. (3) FIREARM had a couple of decent efforts to close out his 2YO campaign – hard to really gauge his return qualifier, but couldn’t blame anybody looking to try him at a price tonight. (5) YANKEE CLOUT returns from Canada showing a 1 for 46 career slate – he does have 18 2nds and 3rds, however, so perhaps consider underneath? (4) VALENTINE HUNTER went his best local mile when 2nd to #8 last week – he’s just 1 for 26, though, and another that would be tough to use on top. Both (1) BEST BETTOR and (2) MAN RAY land inside, but neither seems ready to be a player at the moment.

RACE 7 – (7) BIG GULP probably wasn’t even at his best when he won from Post 8 in his Hilltop debut, but he certainly looked very good stepping up a notch and winning very easily last week – steps up again and draws Post 7, but still may be sharp enough to keep the ball rolling. (6) DEETZY got stung very hard for the lead last week (:26.4) and that left him a little short after having to do battle with the eventual winner, ALL ALONG – he loves to win races, and that 6-1 ML price does give him appeal. (2) CADILLAC BAYAMA struggled after arriving here in late 2023 but he’s come back sharp in the new year, starting off 4-2-1-1…steps up a notch off last week’s easy victory, and can be in the mix here too. (3) EVER HOPING A has been solid in 3 local tries, and a live trip could help him grab a good piece here too. (1) TOPVILLE SOMROCKET had some good starts here last year, but MAY be a bit on the cheaper side as he makes his Hilltop return – mixed feelings about his chances for tonight. (4) MIGHTY SANTA NA N has a few 2nds at big prices this year but may need to be in a bit easier – leaning more towards others. (5) LA YTON HANOVER was scr, sick form his last and comes into this off a month – sticking with others. (8) KARLOO BRADLEY N is also off a bad date, and is stuck with Post 8

RACE 8 – (1) ONTOP RAINMAN hasn’t exactly been a winning machine (5 for 46) but he’s a solid 14-2-1-5 here at Yonkers, and did finish full of pace from tough spots in his last pair – maybe he can make that big kick count tonight with the move back inside. (5) MIDNIGHT THUNDER does have ability and ships in off some sharp NJ tries – the homebred HAS struggled in several Yonkers starts, however, so be careful about accepting too short a price here. (4) RAYRAY disappointed last week but may have disliked the off going – deserves a chance to bounce back to his previously sharp form. (6) BULLVILLE STEPHANO hasn’t shown much in his 2 2024 starts (at PCD) but he does have ability, and did win here as a 3YO – not a bad one to consider, if the price is big enough. (3) FANTOME EN JOIE was well backed last week and did go right to the top before making a costly miscue (on the off going) – he’ll probably be handled conservatively here, but still could easily outrace that 20-1 ML price. (7) TWO FACED has been solid overall lately but did disappoint just a bit from the pocket last week– tonight’s draw certainly won’t help his chances. (2) OHOKA LE BRON N was distanced in his last 2 starts and one has to wonder what it takes to get on the “judges list” these days! (8) PINE BUSH ITALIANO is 22-0-0-1 at YR over the last 2 years

RACE 9 – (2) DP REALORDEAL broke a long Yonkers losing streak with a very sharp win 2 back, then raced as well as could be expected from an impossible (8 hole) spot last week – moves inside, and looks like a real threat to pick up another victory. (4) KOMODO BEACH has been well bet or VERY heavily bet in all 3 local starts this year – he was able to wire the field one of those weeks, but was nowhere to be found in the other two (including a
disastrous non-effort at 5 cents on the dollar last week) – the “x factor” tonight! (1) VULCAN STAR N winless in 10 starts this year but did race well in several of his 6 YR starts – good one to use in exotics. (3) ALWAYS ROCKIN has been limited to minor spoils since moving up too high in class - drops a peg tonight, we’ll see if he can grab a bigger share. (7) WINDSUN RICKY was an easy winner last week and tonight’s class jump really shouldn’t phase him – the outside draw IS an issue however, and there’s a decent chance he could be handled conservatively here – maybe the tote board will offer some clues as to his intentions. (5) VIRTUAL HORIZON was 16-13-1-1 in Western Canada last year but he’s found things a LOT tougher since shipping east – prefer to just observe in his first local try. (8) GRAY DRAGON raced here back in 2021 and while he did have some success, he never seemed all that smooth getting around the track – tough task starting from Post 8 tonight! (6) ROCK CANDY looked absolutely short last week returning from the lengthy layoff

RACE 10 – Good race: (5) OAKWOOD PADDY IR was forced to back off early on last week, came out first over to 3/4s then angled wide into the stretch, full of pace late to be a close 3rd – he’s hit board every week for ages, and may just be a good trip away from pulling off a mild upset here. (2) NIGHT HAWK picked up his first win since 202s on 3/12 then followed that up with another victory the next start – he couldn’t quite finish the job when a close 3rs last week, but he remains a very dangerous player, especially after drawing inside a few main rivals. (6) HUNTING ZONE was a solid performer in 2023 but he’s been that much better so far in ’24, off to a 6-2-2-1 start and finishing full of pace every week – tough draw, but perhaps the red-hot Kakaley can find him a manageable trip. (7) THUNDER HUNTER JOE drops from the Borgata Series but lands all the way outside – hard to say how aggressively he’ll be handled, even with the class relief. (1) FESS UP N has done solid work out of town since starting his U.S. career in March but he’ll need to show that he can be as successful with the locals. (3) SANTANA HANOVER seems a notch below the main players but note that his barn sent out three winners on Monday night. (4) PANETTONE HANOVER has his moments, but would probably like to be in a bit easier

RACE 11 – (4) PINK RUBY had a win and a 2nd with Gingras back in January so it was no surprise to see her race very well last week when they reunited once more – she came up 2nd best last time, but we’ll look for her to come out on top tonight. (1) LOOKATMYART definitely prefers racing in 20s these days and while she’s still winless on the year, she’s very solid in this class – she’s looking at a good trip here, and should be able to have a good say. (5) UNITY was no factor in her last pair but that was racing from the back vs. 25s– the class drop should help, and she’s another logical player. (7) ALWAYS B MIMI threw a dullish one off the claim last week but may have been hurt by the off going – her price will go way up tonight for those looking to stay on board. (3) TUAPAKEY JESSIE N hasn’t been sharp in some time, but her barn is starting to perk up and we’ll see if she can be the next one to deliver an improved effort. (6) BROOKDALE JESSIE gets her share of small pieces but even that could be tough from this poor post. (8) TUGGINGONCREDIT has been struggling – Post 8 isn’t going to help! (2) CAPTAINS STAR has been away since October and that qualifier isn’t all that encouraging

RACE 12 – (5) HUNTERS HERO charged home to just miss in his 4YO return then came up 2nd best to a very sharp HUNTING ZONE the next week – ventured over to Pocono after that for a couple of starts and now returns after picking up a win and a 2nd over there- hard to NOT give this guy a shot after the night his barn had on Monday! (8) VICI has been amazing for his owners, as all his recent 2nds and 3rds have allowed him to stay eligible to this class – he goes a big mile every week, and it’s only a matter of time before he comes out on top – maybe after their 3 win night on Monday, his barn can get this guy into the winner’s circle as well? (3) STATESIDE DEUCE GB is now 6-4-1-1 in the U.S. but he hasn’t been overly “impressive” in any of those starts – can’t fault his success, but he may be vulnerable in this solid field. (7) GRETZKY THE GREAT was handled very conservatively off the sick scratch last week but was charging at the wire, almost getting to #3 – can be a threat tonight (at a price) if MacDonald can get him into the hunt. (1) HEZ ALLTHE RAGE N was ready for his U.S. debut and delivered a sharp front end score – he had some gait issues in his next start, however, and it cost him a chance for a better piece – we’ll see which version shows up tonight. (4) CLEVELAND B MIKI adds Lasix and isn’t a bad bomb for 3/4th. (2) PEETIE disappointed in his local debut but was racing off a bad date – sticking with others, but not writing him off just yet. (6) BETTER OFF SINGLE debuts for our leading barn but he’s missed time and it can’t be a good sign that Bartlett opts to drive #3.