

## Ellis Park

### Race by Race Analysis

#### Saturday, July 2 – Race Day 1

**FIRST** – Trainer Steve Asmussen and regular rider Ricardo Santana look to get the 2016 Ellis meet off to rousing start with ROWDY RONDA. Giant Oak filly takes a big class drop and cuts back in distance after couple disappointing races at Indiana. She hasn't shown much in any of her four starts but class drop and connections make her a short price here. SPRUCE RIDGE LADY hasn't finished in front of another horse in two career starts but drops to the bottom here. PRIME MONEY was an even 4<sup>th</sup> last race, first start for trainer Mark Cristel; best two races were on sloppy tracks. BENDAS CONQUEST was 3<sup>rd</sup> three starts back but showed little in two recent races and minor award probably best she can manage.

*Selections*      **3-1-8-2**

**SECOND** – Interesting race for a short field. TANNER'S POPCICLE hasn't raced for two months but has won off a layoff before and though never been here, five of seven wins have been at different tracks, so doesn't need a home court advantage. Morning works for the return have been stellar and looks fast enough to get the lead from cozy outside post. Classy veteran GOOD LORD has tailed off this year but loves Ellis winning half his six races here and this field is easiest he's seen this year. SNOW LEOPARD and DOUBLEDOWN AGAIN are both capable at this level; DOUBLEDOWN had a short rest since the April 30 race and preps for this with a nice bullet work at Churchill two weeks ago.

*Selections*      **5-1-4-3**

**THIRD** – THEYCALLHIMTHEKID makes his second lifetime start, tries a mile after a turf sprint at Canterbury for high percentage trainer Mike Stidham. Sent off in his debut at 6/5, he made the lead but was caught in the stretch but almost four lengths clear of third place finisher. Certainly bred to go longer and Stidham numbers above average with runners making second start and stretching out. HARD WAY TO GO also makes his second start, he made the early running at Belterra faded late but beat half the field only three lengths behind the winner over a yielding turf course. Not a lot of early speed evident here and if he can get to the front holds on for a share. LIGHT BRIGADE makes his second start of the year; the June 5 race sprinting on dirt looks like a prep for this, colt is bred for grass and much easier spot than any of his previous races. CHASIN CHARLIE tried turf first time last race and finished midpack; he's run behind a couple horses that have gone on to stakes and late close from way back might get him a minor spot.

*Selections*      **8-3-9-1**

**FOURTH** – WHATACLASSYLADY folded early in her 2016 comeback race but that was against a field of \$40,000 claimers. She's in for \$5,000 today and trainer wins over 25% making second start after long layoffs; even with the desperate drop looks most logical. TIZTHE DREAM was claimed for \$20,000 two starts back when she broke her maiden but first race for new connections ended up basically eased. Any of her three previous starts would win this easily but can't overlook the recent poor effort. WHISKEY TAIL was competitive at this level for her Turfway this spring but best races were going longer; tab her for next start when stretching out. STARSHIP AQUARIUS ran her best race in a year last start ,2<sup>nd</sup> at 50-1 after not beating a horse in her previous four efforts; not optimistic she can repeat.

*Selections*      **4-2-7-5**

**FIFTH** – ISLAND REWARD looks tough here, 3<sup>rd</sup> in a tough allowance race at Churchill last time after a maiden breaker at today's distance. The only time she was off the board on the grass was a very tough, key maiden race at Gulfstream that produced four next out winners. Running style puts her on, or just off early lead and repeat of last two races should be good enough. ALWAYS RIGHT looks like the main threat, cutting back to a mile, which looks like her best distance. Maiden win at Keeneland in a full field was impressive as runner-up that day came back to win next start. CAPE CAROLINE might be better going longer. Price play to make an impact looks like SISTER BLUES, the race two starts back at Keeneland probably good enough to win this but last race was one paced; high percentage trainer Brad Cox

*Selections*      **6-9-8-3**

**SIXTH** – Four of the ten starters haven't run yet this year and I'll go for some déjà vu with WILDCAT COUNTRY who won a similar condition race here last year on opening weekend. 7-year old shows three good morning works, one of only two that looks fast enough to get the lead if he can manage a good break from the rail post. DA DON invades from Mountaineer and makes third start this year; has good record at Ellis, five times on the board from eight starts including a win last summer. DETERMINATO should fit better here; effort at Churchill was his first race in a year against open \$5,000 claimers. SWEAR has the best record at today's five furlong distance but has run 3<sup>rd</sup> twice as many times as win/place.

*Selections*      **1-8-5-2**

**SEVENTH** – Open \$5,000 fillies on the turf and KITCHEN BOSS shows up for trainer Steve Asmussen. Last three starts in Texas were mid-pack finishes for twice this claiming price and picks up Ricardo Santana. Asmussen's 'regular' rider for the first time. Mare's running style usually has her way back early but expect her to be a little closer with the drop in class. BEYOND also drops in class for first time to this level. Her last three starts were in Chicago, all on soft/yielding turf; hasn't won in awhile but on the board eight times in last year. Only one coming into the race off a win is SQUATTY who was impressive in recent dirt sprint at Churchill. With no early speed should be on the lead but hasn't gone farther than ¾ mile in last year. SUGAR KATE has been steady in her recent races all on dirt but has won on the grass.

*Selections*      **6-5-7-8**

**EIGHTH** – MR SENSIBILITY showed improvement last two races on the grass at Indiana when in for a \$25,000 claiming price. He beat half the field in those starts but only 3-4 lengths behind the winner and drop in class here makes him logical challenger. Main threat looks like OPTICAL taking a big drop from \$40,000 race at Churchill; each of his last two races the winner came back to win next start and he should save ground from rail post. BIG BROWN SEVENS makes his second career start; showed little on the dirt but bred to like grass and gets Lasix first time. GUALAMO also ran just one time, big drop immediately from \$50,000 for Ken McPeck; he took some money for debut and showed little but trainer wins 16% with second lifetime starters.

*Selections*      **5-1-2-4**