

Craig Donnelly's





Craig has been involved in horseracing for 50 years as a handicapper, journalist, linemaker and analyst. He began his career in 1969 handicapping the races for the Miami Beach Sun. Beginning in 1971 he began picking winners for the Philadelphia Inquirer, where he remained for 37 years. Craig has also been a linemaker for the Atlantic City Racecourse and The Meadowlands, where he was the program oddsmaker and television co-host for seven seasons.

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TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 2025 - FIRST POST 12:40 P.M.

Best Bets: PERSUASIVE (3rd) – FREAKAZOID (6th)

Race 1

- 9 ADDIEADDIEBOBADDIE Plunges after stopping in route; improves with this kind sprinting.
- FAUX PAS Frequently close at various distances but had 19 chances; edged at this yardage.
- 2 LADY AMELIE Prominent throughout at Penn after far behind in pair of local outings.
- J J'S HONOR Takes top to bottom plunge and flashes of interest in prior races.

Race 2

- E T'S GYPSY ROSE Significant drop from "key" race and ran down loose pacesetter prior try.
- 2 | FIFTY NINE FIFTY Used up early when in too deep but fits nicely with this kind as threat.
- SILVER CITY KITTY Back sprinting for amount of April claim; gets blinkers as contender.
- MISS RAUCUS Trounced weak compact field in confidence booster; outrun by second pick.

Race 3

- 5 PERSUASIVE Discovered ability when plunging and trying blinkers; initial test of stamina.
- 3 MIDWAY VOW Walloped maidens in Oaklawn finale then absent three months; barn firing.
- 4 MOMMA PIC Closer than odds predicted this spot and possibility with further progress.
- TARIBA DREAM Decisive score in Tampa route in second race of season; new management.

Race 4

- TIZ RACE DAY Speedy filly re-claimed by Ness and drops; difficult to catch with this kind.
- **2** BEYOND A MILLION Drew away with energy in reserve despite early trouble when claimed.
- CINDY'S SONG Moves turf to dirt with speed inside; best effort this season on wet footing.
- QUARTERFLASH Defeated second choice when Kirby barn took to end long losing skid.

Race 5

- NORMANDY HERO Used up early in classier company at Pimlico; led routers this far locally.
- BOBBY'S CANDY Fired this spot one week ago and formed bottom of exacta 12 occasions.
- ZIPPY GIZMO Slow fuse but likely gaining late with helpful pace scenario; merits attention.
- TIEMPO PERFECTO Nailed heavy favorite and logical next step but just 3-for-42 lifetime.

Race 6

- FREAKAZOID Pulled away impressively despite long duel after arriving from Gulfstream.
- 5 SUNDAY SPIRIT Eventful trip this spot as odds-on chalk and numerous losses at short prices.
- **7** EXCLUSIVE DANCER Second best to huge favorite in possibly strongest effort of career.
- MODERN ERA Rallied last to first in just second outing of season; pair of scores from 26 races

Race 7 BIG BOYS ANSWER – Game and versatile gelding won last three sprints on fast surfaces. NO EASY DAYS – Edged away at Monmouth after long duel and battled streaking winner locally. SPEEDYNESS – Set up nicely for elongated sprint dueling in classy routes; threat in tough field. FAR MO POWER - Passed entire quality field this yardage when looking more like old self. Race 8 JUMP A FOX – Improved stretch-runner exits pair of strong efforts since Gallimore re-claimed. ANGEL OF HOPE – Decisive score after layoff when adding Lasix; threat with realistic next step. TRUE PHENOMENON – Humbled by smashing route winner 10 days ago; just 4-for-33 career. WARRIOR'S DEFENSE – Crushed lesser at Penn and usually close; Kulp stable hitting at 29%. Race 9 3 SUE ELLEN MISHKIN - Weakened as odds-on chalk when Ness claimed back; can wire these. 8 POPTHECHAMPAGNE RO – Drops notch in third outing since layoff; likely gaining late. CRÈME CARAMEL – Just over length behind despite very wide rally; close to top pick before.

BUCKS SOME – Ten-year-old mare with stamina issues but can't dismiss with \$415,545 in bank.