

# **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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Best Bets: AMORE D'ORO (7<sup>th</sup>) – GLOWS IN THE DARK (9<sup>th</sup>)

### Race 1

- POLAR MAGIC Full-sister to 2023 Park Horse of the Year Aoife's Magic debuts with fast works.
- **T** EXTRASEXYZQTEEPEYE Very game in improved effort when easily second best; main threat.
- COPPEDGE Sire won maiden test locally then three graded stakes; outrun in bulky field.
- WINNIE MAE Rallied nicely behind second pick in debut when ignored at 100-1 in wagering.

#### Race 2

- 9 MELITTLEFROSTGIRL Excellent speed in longer test when edged by huge favorite in best yet.
- SHUDABEENACOWGIRL Battled throughout in compact field after Gallimore claim; rail speed.
- HALA BLUE Responded favorably to plunge firing on turf and dirt; closer than odds predict.
- 2 CHAMPAGNE MISCHIEF Yet another front-runner exiting maiden score in Jersey; fits nicely.

#### Race 3

- 2 LOVE LIKE CRAZY Victim of early trouble when overmatched and won prior two outings.
- 3 CHARM OF THE SONG Sufficient ability but idle three months and serious contender if ready.
- SOFSTER Humbled by smashing winner this spot in local bow; best effort after layoff in June.
- MO'S VINO MESA Step forward against similar and won twice earlier at Tampa; upset shot.

#### Race 4

- IT'S GAME TIME Nine-year-old with 19 victories seen better days but should handle this kind.
- ZAP MOTION Underwent shoe repair prior to chasing smashing winner; outrun by top pick.
- DOCTOR DOOM Ages since last victory but could benefit from time off for new management.
- 2 ALLABOUTTHEMONEY Good effort on occasion but failing to run to support recent months.

#### Race 5

- FREEDOM ROAD Amazing veteran with 13-for-29 mark shelved since March; 3-for-4 locally.
- NORMANDY BEACH Speedy and determined and proven he fits with these; formidable on best
- NO EASY DAYS Narrowly beaten despite traffic trouble in stretch; nearly always fires.
- TAP IN FORMATION Overcame slow start to defeat some of these; proven bargain claim.

#### Race 6

- RESEARCH TRIANGLE Second to impressive Lynch barn rookie at Penn; prior loss on turf.
- B DRESS LIKE COCO Used up dueling in bulky field; only prior try encouraging, moves outside.
- WESAWTAYLORINPARIS Fair showing in debut when 9-5 favorite; \$70,000 purchase this year
- ZEPHYR'S JEWEL Newcomer from leading Maryland stable prepping over deeper surface.

## Race 7 AMORE D'ORO – Faced solid Jersey-breds at Monmouth after crushing capable local rivals. DEVIL'S CAY – Battled throughout when runner-up to stablemate this spot; case of seconditis. REBEL INVASION – Pressured throughout but prevailed at Penn in just third race since layoff. JACKSON ROAD – Just behind couple of these and decisive score with slightly easier prior. Race 8 PONDER AND DREAM – Dueled and continued gamely in debut; winner heavily-backed shipper. MISTER ME – Outran top choice in bow and moves inside as obvious threat for top stable. CONNOR'S CREW – Out of dam which captured terrific 18 races primarily on Maryland circuit. 3 OUR NOTION – By leading Maryland stallion Great Notion and worked half mile "bullet" from gate Race 9 GLOWS IN THE DARK – Rallied behind formidable rival in sprint; should like additional yardage. UP N RUNNIN – Easily second best in sprint stake and showed route prowess in maiden romp. IRISH BANBA - Edged tough field of maidens in just second race of year; can continue progress RACEY RUBY - Numerous strong efforts but difficult to support off last; sheds seven pounds. Race 10 HARP'S HOT CORNER – Difficult to like or dismiss plunge; great record with Sanchez aboard. AHSAD – Returns to amount of August claim seeking 16th victory in amazing 105th attempt.

CATIRE VIZCAYA – Chased speedy winner in mud and possible pacesetter stretching out again.

MAJOR THOMAS – Wired on Penn turf when high percentage barn took; handles various footing