

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: KEEPING THE FAITH (3rd) - BEYONDEXPECTATIONS (8th)

Race 1

- 4 DELICATE Difficult to like or ignore plunge but major ability advantage at suitable distance.
- ALYVIA'S GIRL Chased more numerous winner when claimed fourth consecutive outing.
- B DARK DUTCHESS Some success here last winter but most effective on turf; can't dismiss.
- SOFSTER Flashing speed recent outings but stamina woes persist; best race after layoff.

Race 2

- DESERT AIRE Shelved since voided claim in April but ability edge vs. soft opposition.
- WINNING SONG Stablemate of top choice remote fourth this spot but capable of better.
- 2 CARRY GRANT Very slow fuse and 24 defeats but likely gaining late to hit board.
- 5 LITTLE SNECKDRAW Finished mid-pack in sprint debut; experience aids and tries route.

Race 3

- KEEPING THE FAITH Chased smashing winner in tougher version this spot; testing stamina.
- IT'S AUTHENTIC Edged when easily second best at lower level following Abrams claim.
- PASTERO Just over length behind top choice as longshot; speed from outside in route.
- 2 SUNNY MAGIC Absent over four months but ample ability; should ensure lively fractions.

Race 4

- CHRIS'S REVENGE Adjusted nicely to dirt sprint after Colonial claim; logical next step.
- OKIE DEN DEN Consistently close at various distances; often forms bottom of exacta.
- ORTHO STAR Overcame early trouble in decisive score; just missed top pick prior outing.
- TWENTY ONE KID May have needed first race since April when prevailing at Aqueduct.

Race 5

- MISS JONES Rallied through traffic for higher tag; raced sparingly but talent advantage.
- WEST SIDE DIVA Trounced weak group of maidens in just second outing since January.
- BREEZETHRUTIME Far back twice when overmatched but likely suited stretching out again.
- SAINT GRACE Gained late at 35-1 in blanket finish at Delaware; won prior try this yardage.

Race 6

- HI HEELED WARRIOR Tired after middle move with similar; upsets if puts it all together.
- BEYOND A MILLION Set pace in race taken by deep closer; veteran capable in past.
- 8 EXPECT TO BE READY Forced pace then retreated for higher tag after claim; 10 victories.
- 4 MEGAN'S NOEL Won this spot as heavy favorite two months ago; obvious threat for 32% barn

Race 7 8 UNION PURRFECTION – Unruly at gate then broke poorly when third to pair of favorites. IMMORTAL J – Narrowed big gap when edged at Penn on wet footing; adding blinkers. BIG DOSSER – Led to stretch with routers and competing better than odds predict lately. MOVING TO KENTUCKY – Used up after awkward start and puts blinkers on again. Race 8 BEYONDEXPECTATIONS – Exits pair of frustrating losses when disqualified and beaten by head MARVELOUS MO – Fired all five outings this season but outrun by top choice with wide bid. 2 QUASI WARRIOR – Pair of strong showings at Penn vs. state-breds; pair of quick works for this. WILLISAU – Flashed speed when finishing behind pair above; some progress necessary. Race 9 4 HARP'S HOT CORNER – Amazing 9-for-15 locally with loads of success in Ness barn; good spot GRAHMALAMADINGDONG – Game score after tossing rider in gate; bargain claim by Guerrero. NINJA PRIZE – Hard-earned score when re-claimed soon as possible by Pino; speedy and game. FACTOR U AND ME IN – Vastly improved and led throughout but disqualified for interference. Race 10 RAMA BAMA LANA – Drew away from maidens after Padilla claim; edge with logical next step.

YO LEVEN – Set up nicely for sprint dueling long way in route; often claimed for high tags. SHUDABEENACOWGIRL – Prominent throughout last pair but lone victory in 21 attempts.

LUMENIQUE – Narrowed gap at Delaware and ample targets with leading rider Sanchez aboard.