



Craig Donnelly's

ANALY\$I\$
@parxracing



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 23, 2026 – FIRST POST 12:40 P.M.

Best Bets: **DEVIL'S CAY (6th) – ROCK ME GENTLY (7th)**

Race 1

- 6** LAUGH LIKE LUCY – Battled heavy favorite when easily second best in longer test; new barn.
- 1** JOYFUL JOYCE – Lacked best effort on wet surface after pair of strong efforts; won for Martinez.
- 3** SHERUNSTHISTOWN – Moves turf to dirt and drops in third race after layoff; lures Lopez.
- 2** LEILAUNI SUE – Humbled by runaway winner and numerous good efforts in past; top “bug” up.

Race 2

- 6** AMEDEUS MUSIC – Used up after slow start against smashing winner; crushed lesser prior try.
- 3** TRANSCENDENTAL – Latest discouraging but numerous big efforts in past; stamina tested.
- 4** NIXON JOY – Slow fuse but strong closing kick and likely contested fractions in his favor.
- 1** MALIBU WARRIOR – Bargain claim drops in for tag after rare poor showing; speed inside.

Race 3

- 4** RACE FOR COVER – Flashed speed in February debut at Turfway; Pa.-bred moves to Linder.
- 5** ALASTAR – Speedy but several defeats at short odds in seven attempts; changed barns.
- 6** ARCH COMPETITOR – Racing into shape again after long absence; back with sprinters.
- 1** KING OF SALSA – Far back twice since arriving from Kentucky but drops and might progress.

Race 4

- 2** HARPS HOT CORNER – Terrific gelding with 12 local victories in just 23 starts; fits well again.
- 3** LUCKY DUDE – Game and versatile veteran nearly always fires; wins this year here and N.Y.
- 6** A VOTRE SANTE – Determined try when edged by heavy favorite and wired solid group prior try.
- 1** PREACH IT WARRIOR – Rapid gelding game when reaches front but must adjust to rare sprint.

Race 5

- 2** ALWAYS IN PLAY – Back around two turns; held off next-out winner in prolonged duel May.
- 4** AMERICAN PEACHES – Finished behind top pick in sprint after claim; tried routes last season.
- 1** CANDOTHIS – Offers speed inside and remote third this spot in last; lone score on wet track.
- 3** SUGAR PRINCESS – Stretching out again and remains eligible as 3-year-old; merits attention.

Race 6

- 3** DEVIL'S CAY – Pulled away to double-digit romp when Ness re-claimed; well-spotted again.
- 4** DRUM ROLL PLEASE – Strong runner-up with state-breds after returning from Oaklawn.
- 6** EPIC LUCK – Edged capable field at Delaware after pair of sharp local tries; figures close.
- 7** ELUSIVE TARGET – Difficult wide trip in latest and just missed previously; best needed.

Race 7

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| 5 | ROCK ME GENTLY – Weakened under pressure in good effort; impressed after layoff previously. |
| 4 | WHATTA WORLD – Adjusted well to sprinting again on main track; powerful late kick in March. |
| 1 | LITTLE COCOA BEAN – Rapid filly often difficult to catch but humbled earlier by top pair. |
| 6 | SHUBAGAIL – Stretch-runner seeking third straight for Vega barn; sufficient early targets. |

Race 8

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| 4 | KAPPA KAPPA – Victim of early trouble after layoff on Preakness undercard; won Grade 2 stake. |
| 1 | ICONA MAMA – Cruised past capable rivals in second race since return; logical next step. |
| 7 | CENTRE COURT CHAMP – Lightly raced but many powerful scores; excellent 10-for-26 career. |
| 5 | BELLA QUEEN – Led throughout in Laurel mile to end losing streak; back home sprinting. |

Race 9

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| 5 | INNER EXCELLENCE – Drops notch returning to sprint and appears suited by yardage in finale. |
| 3 | SMOKIN HOT WIFE – Outrun since arriving from Kentucky but drops again in 14th attempt. |
| 2 | THINK I'M IN LOVE – Unruly prior to latest and hits bottom as possibility with this kind. |
| 4 | IRIE AND MELLOW – Probable pacesetter might shake loose early; stamina issues persist. |