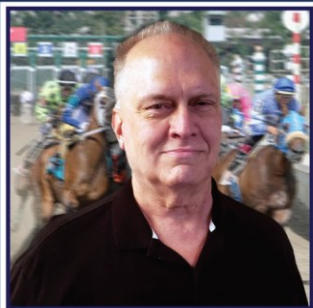




Craig Donnelly's

ANALY\$IS

@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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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2026 -PENNSYLVANIA DERBY- COTILLION-10:35 AM

Best Bets: PRONGHORN (7th) – MONSTER MAX (15th)

Race 1

- 8** FIRST SITE – Raced greenly on turn at Saratoga behind impressive newcomer; blinkers may help.
- 2** TURNING TO GOLD – Encouraging effort against Ky. invader and edged previously; blinkers on.
- 9** JUST GIA – Rookie by very quick sire Army Mule cost \$210,000 at auction; works offer few clues.
- 1** PHILLY GIRL – Used up after early excuse when heavily-backed in debut; progress anticipated.

Race 2

- 1** LOST AND CONFUSED – Looked like old self again when rallying strongly despite stretch trouble.
- 5** FREAKAZOID – Just one length behind after poor start in just second start after long absence.
- 8** NOGRADI – Road warrior with late kick overmatched last pair but perfect in two local outings.
- 9** WISH CAREFULLY – Finished behind top choice as 8-5 chalk but romped previously at Penn.

Race 3

- 14** SOUL BAND – Bold move to contention after slow start as 6-5 favorite in debut at Delaware.
- 3** MIDNIGHT RIDE – Stakes-placed twice when closer than odds predicted; adding blinkers.
- 10** BISHOPS GATE – Late rally behind speedy newcomer in bow; \$75,000 buy should progress.
- 5** MCCOY – By top sire Vekoma and dam speedy turf runner on this circuit; ample preparation.

Race 4

- 14** LADY ANNABELLE – Terrific mare defeated similar and seeks sixth straight; clear sailing outside.
- 3** ITSAMONSTAMASH – Overmatched in last after just missing when claimed for \$32,000 prior effort.
- 2** FOGGY NOTE – Frequently close elsewhere and ended losing streak at Monmouth; fits nicely.
- 4** MAXIMUS ANGELICUS – Rebounded from poor showing with decisive score in mud; retains Lopez.

Race 5 THE \$100,000 TURNING FOR HOME CLASSIC

- 8** CONCRETE GLORY – Rapid and amazing veteran with 18-for-44 record; dueled quality opposition.
- 3** PACO THE TACO MAN – Within half length of perfect in five attempts since Ness claim; dangerous.
- 2** HARP'S HOT CORNER – Just lasted and changed hands again when boosting record to 13-for-27.
- 4** GREAT COMPOSER – Speedy gelding developed well this season facing quality rivals for Perez.

Race 6 THE \$100,000 SALVATORE M. DeBUNDA MEMORIAL

- 9** SECANE – May have needed first outing since March and began career with ample promise.
- 2** DIVINE SEEKER – Battled streaking winner last pair and appears to always give her best.
- 10** TRUTHORCONSEQUENCE – Rapid filly very determined again in narrow score in compact field.
- 8** WHATTA WORLD – Ran into tigress in latest for high percentage barn; impressed here in March.

Race 7 THE \$150,000 PHILLY SPECIAL

- 3** PRONGHORN – Decisive score after hiatus at Saratoga; romped twice earlier in Oaklawn routes.
- 6** U LITE UP MY LIFE – Consistently close at tough meets and exits possibly best effort of career.
- 7** NATURE'S CANDY – Speedy and versatile mare wired capable Pa.-breds and also handles route.
- 4** JEANNE MARIE – Failed to give true measure in wide trip at Delaware; solid effort on occasion.

Race 8 THE \$150,000 STABLE RECOVERY STAKES	
1	FIRE PIT – Survived traffic problems to capture third straight; showed class in 2025 Grade II.
5	QUINT’S BREW – Battled one of top sprinters in nation at Monmouth; 8-for-15 lifetime.
2	BUCCHERINO – Among best local sprinters ever and vied to final furlong after layoff.
4	MAXIMUS MERIDIUS – Continued gamely after heated duel; held on tenaciously prior score.
Race 9 THE \$150,000 LIBERTY BELL	
4	HAULIN ICE – Hard-hitting mare exits placing in Grade II at Spa; terrific 12-for-24 career mark.
7	SHE’S A GAMER – Bargain claim by Breen barn wired Saratoga rivals and ultra-consistent.
2	CARMELINA – Failed to give true measure as heavy favorite; finished ahead of top pick prior try.
9	IRISH MAXIMA – Yet another amazing mare perfect locally; loads of success with Pennington up.
Race 10 THE \$150,000 GREENWOOD CUP	
9	PARCHMENT PARTY – Lone member of field with marathon success at Churchill and Oaklawn.
5	CAROLO RAPIDO – Finished behind top pick at Spa but often claimed for high tags elsewhere.
8	STRONSINO – Speedy gelding likely to control fractions and key third race since layoff.
3	SAN SIRO – Rallied from last to first in Saratoga finale and should be prepared for more yardage.
Race 11 THE \$300,000 PARX DIRT MILE	
5	BRACKET BUSTER – Showed fitness romping in first start of year; runner-up in 2025 Travers.
3	NELSON AVENUE – Gained late in just fourth race of season and won this event last year.
10	SAUDI CROWN – Used up dueling in last but formidable when reaches front early; \$3.7 million.
9	MOVISITOR – Led throughout despite making first attempt in 14 months; returns home.
Race 12 THE \$400,000 GALLANT BOB STAKES	
8	STRADALE – Captured Grade III at Spa on turf and appears equally adept on main track.
6	DR. KAPUR – Rediscovered ability in upset score and showed much promise as juvenile.
5	LANGVAD – Improving colt very determined in narrow loss in rich stake as longshot.
10	CAPTIVATOR – West Coast shipper flawless since return; contributes to lively fractions.
Race 13 THE \$1,000,000 COTILLION STAKES	
4	ALWAYS A RUNNER – Only two losses against top filly in division; ample targets for late kick.
5	IRON ORCHARD – Set pace and eagerly pulled away from state-breds at Saratoga; peak form.
7	MS SOPHISTICATION – Extremely game in narrow defeat and benefit of race over track.
8	MEASURE – Stretch-runner closer than odds predicted lately; leading Spa rider aboard.
Race 14 THE \$1,000,000 PENNSYLVANIA DERBY	
7	FURTHER ADO – Disliked wet footing in Haskell; won prior outing and awesome in Blue Grass.
3	OUR MONEYMAN – Pressured top choice at Churchill and hit board all nine attempts.
1	ZIHNAL – Pulled away with energy in reserve when trying blinkers; upset possibility.
6	THE PUMA – Slow fuse but also adds blinkers and defeated top selection at Tampa.
Race 15	
2	MONSTER MAX – Powerful gelding drew away impressively in first start of year; tackles tougher.
5	MISTER ME – Chased runaway winner in route after beating solid group of sprinters.
8	FLYIN HAWAIIAN – Rallied despite early trouble after layoff; work best of 88 at half mile.
10	TROTSKY – Outdueled previously unbeaten rival recently and seems well-spotted again.