

Fort Erie Selections: Monday, October 2nd, 2023

We kick off our first card in October with an eight-race program the features a pair of competitive starter optional claiming events on the turf course. Good luck to today's connections and those wagering on the races!

- Ashley Mailloux

Race 1: #5 Beautiful as You hasn't shown much in her three starts, but she's at least been somewhat forward from the gate, tracking just a handful of lengths off the pacesetter(s). She's out of an A.P. Indy mare, Serenading, who was a G2 winner on dirt. She's by Maclean's Music, who has done well with his dirt routers (17%). **#1 Perfection Saver** is finally getting an opportunity to go long on the dirt after two starts for trainer Myckie Neubauer. In her first start at the meet, she ran well around two-turns on the turf - she closed from off the pace to finish third, beaten by three lengths. Last time out, she sprinted on the dirt and finished third, but the top two finishers went around the track 1-2 throughout and the winner came back to win next time out. This filly ran her best race on debut, at a mile, at Horseshoe Indy and from the rail, she could get a solid trip on the stretch out. Trainer John Simms will send out two in this spot, including **#3 Victorious Tapit**, who exits the same race as Perfection Saver. It was this filly's first start for the new connections, and she simply was second best. The barn does well with horses moving from a sprint to a route and could improve making her second start since late June.

Race 2: #4 Mr. De will try to wake up on the surface switch for owner/trainer Steven Chircop. This son of Runhappy's best performance of the year was three starts back against \$10K maiden claimers over the tapeta. He closed on a hot tempo to finish second. Since then, he's split two large fields, but has needed more in the stretch. Last time out, he did have some trouble out of the gate, when his inside rival made contact, which didn't help things. Class relief is what **#5 Opeechee** will lean on to get back on track after finishing fifth last time out against maiden special weight competition. He broke sharp from the outside, but after three rivals rushed up, he sat off it and never made an impact. Those three rivals ended up being the top three finishers, but after breaking sharp, it would've been nice to see this gelding keep up with the group a bit more. He does drop down in class for the first time since behind claimed by his current connections. **#1 Ngabe** finished mid-pack against \$4k maiden claimers on the turf last time out, but now he'll get back on the dirt. While his dirt races have low Beyers, his effort two starts back wasn't bad - he was dead last early on in a race that played well to speed and did make up ground. Pinto gets back aboard him here and with a race together, may she have some takeaways from that one effort.

Race 3: #1 Devil In Her Heart applied pressure to One Last Fling last time out, but the other filly found more in the stretch and dug in on the inside to win by two lengths. Since dropping in for the tag on the dirt, this daughter of Signature Red has been quite competitive and is hard to knock off her last two - she's a strategic type and is the horse to beat on paper. Her main rival is **#4 Honey Girl**, who has been consistent all season long over the main track has been unable to get a victory. She's failed as the favorite in three consecutive starts but has yet to finish worse than third. If her connections decide to implement the same tactics, she'll need some pace to run at and on paper, it's not clear she'll get that. **#3 Ms Suedoo** is a bit of a wildcard against this group - she's only raced twice since October 10th, 2022, and last time out, she took a step forward last time out. She didn't have much pace to close into over the mud but managed to finish third. She's another one who is a bit pace dependent, but her freshness gives her an edge and with what figures to be a fast track, it could turn things around for her.

Race 4: #7 Good Soldier will drop in for the lowest tag of his career in hopes of picking up his second career victory. In recent times, he hasn't shown much of anything over the turf and tapeta at Woodbine. He's faced considerably tougher time and time again, and now will cutback in distance to about seven furlongs on the drop. His lone win came in front-end fashion at Gulfstream Park in his first start of the year against \$20k maiden claimers. Despite his poor efforts, his turf Beyers are certainly the best in the field. While **#5 Miss D's Pride** didn't show much in his last two starts, this is a horse that showed earlier this season he prefers the grass - his three turf efforts in 2023 are all solid. He's raced well at five eighths as well as seven-eighths, as he's been able to typically sit just off the pace. He beat Chicago Freddy in his graduation score on August 8th and did just that. Watch for this Albu-trainee to rebound on the grass. **#4 Chicago Freddy** graduated last time in gate-to-wire fashion against \$4k maiden claimers on the dirt, but prior to that, he raced very well on the turf when he was caught late by Miss D's

Pride, who he'll have to face once again. In his last two starts, he's been keen early on and it's likely that he'll do so once again, but he will need to extend himself around two-turns.

Race 5: #5 Shelly the Rocket has picked up two wins at the meet and most recently, has finished second in her last two starts. Last time out, she was beaten by a salty mare, Jara and two back, she was caught by Louemma, who closed from off the pace. She's going to stretch out slightly to six furlongs today, but based on her performances, the distance shouldn't be an issue. **#6 Shanghai Kimmy** made a big move after being slow from the gate - she was hustled after the tardy start and ended up forcing the pace. All and all, it was a strong effort, as she only missed by a nose and she's the type of mare that's just gotten better as the season progresses - we saw the same thing from her in 2022. **#2 Natasha's Bizniz** went off favored last time out, but it rained drastically before her race, and it appears as though she prefers a fast main track. With that said, she sat just off Jungle Goddess, her stablemate, and Shanghai Kimmy made a bold move somewhat early which left her tracking in third towards the inside. In the stretch, she angled out to try to make a move and avoid some kick back but fell flat. She's simply better than what she showed last time out.

Race 6: #5 Jack the Cat picked up his second win of the year locally two starts back in his first appearance at the Fort. He dropped in for the lowest tag of his career and grinded it out in the stretch to win by a head. He was claimed out of that event for \$4k and made his first start for the new connections at Woodbine against starter optional claiming competition. He tried to close from off the pace on the cutback and managed to get up for third. He finds himself in deeper waters than he faced on September 12th, but he has a ton of back class. **#7 Society Joe** has a bit of a good race, bad race thing going on, but in his lone start here over the turf, he ran a well meant second behind Union Colonel, who is undefeated here on the turf. Last time out, his turf race was a wash-out and he tried the dirt for the first time. He raced okay considering, but figures to improve drastically on the grass. **#1 Dot's Vision** didn't fire last time up at Woodbine in his first start off nearly a three-month layoff. He might have needed the race, but based on his usual turf efforts, it was dull. In his lone start here this season on the turf, he was much the best against this level. His local turf record speaks volumes - a six-time winner from eight attempts.

Race 7: #4 Cant Beat the Katz had the lead at the top of the stretch in the Horsepeople's Luminary Cup, but the two best mares this season were able to pass her in the final sixteenth of a mile - Gimballa re-rallied and Shebatown snuck up the rail to win. This four-year-old filly has held her own all season along against some extremely tough rivals and this is her softest spot of the season... look out. **#1 Jara** picked up her second win of the season last time out against softer competition - she faced non-winners of two races on the year and was much the best. While she steps back up, she's proven she can handle this level of competition. From a pace perspective, she figures to be close to it based on her running style and the fact that she draws the rail, but it's unlikely she'll clear and will need to grind it out late. **#6 Khozzy Valentine** will make her first start for her new connections and will look to keep her win streak alive. She's been extremely consistent this season, winning three of her six starts and even when she's had trouble breaking from the gate, she's been able to recover and workout a trip from off the pace. Kirk Johnson stays aboard her here for the new barn.

Race 8: After being winless in five starts in 2022 with purse earnings of just over \$11k, **#7 Jill** has turned it around as a five-year-old, winning two races and hitting the board in each of her six appearances. She enters this race fresh off a win against allowance optional claiming competition. She was sharp from the rail and in the late stages, was able to dig deep to fight off an opponent. She's speedy but isn't a "need the lead" type and looks live in this deep field. **#8 Snell Flicka** has had a tremendous season so far - she's a three-time winner this year and really has shown up in just about every start, with the exception of her 2023 debut, which was a race she likely needed off the long layoff. Her lone turf try was her most recent start and she raced very well off the pace. It was a change in tactics for this speedster and it seemed as though she was comfortable rating. She's worth considering in the exotics and could be a decent price. **#9 Brienne of TARTH** circled the field last time out to win the starter optional claiming event that both Snell Flicka and Sparkly Sammy exit. The pace was hot enough for her to close, even at the five-furlong distance. This filly has gotten herself into a fair bit of trouble this year, but she can never be counted out - she still runs her race. With this big field and some speed on paper, she could get the same setup.