



A CLOSER LOOK

by The Professor

In-depth analysis of races at The Meadows

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1

RACE 1 – NW 11,000 PACE

1 – KNOCKING AROUND – Too far back early last time, needs a quicker first quarter this week. Finished third in this level 2 starts ago, following 2 wins in lower levels. May be overmatched just a bit in here right now.

2 – MISTER VIRGIN – Stablemate of #1, this one was used twice last week. Used a little bit of early speed to get away fourth, then made a second move into the third quarter. Still had some pace coming home, so it was a decent mile overall. Draws a better post today, which should help his chances.

3 – NITRO SEELSTER – Raced well last time, finishing second in this class. He can definitely hit the ticket in here, but hasn't won in this class for a while. He's finished second three times in his last four outings in this class.

4 – ATTA BOY DAN – This one has now won four in a row in this class, the win streak only interrupted by two starts in the top level. He can't continue the win streak forever, so he's certainly not a lock in here, but he's also tough to pick against while the streak is still alive.

5 – FLASH LAUXMONT – Finished 5th from a bad post in a lower level last time, but made enough money to push his earnings high enough to force him to move up in class. He appears to be a bit overmatched in here.

6 – THE DARK SHADOW – Showed some versatility last time, racing from the back of the pack after missing 3 weeks. Put in a very good mile, making a big move in the third quarter and continuing to pick up ground in the stretch. He figures to be better this week, despite the outside post, making his second start after the 3 weeks off.

SELECTIONS: 4-6-2

RACE 2 – 20,000 CD CLAIMING TROT

1 – FANTASY ROCKET – Changes barns this week after being sold privately. Brocklehurst drove the horse last week, so he should know him a little better. Had no chance last week due to the outside post, so expect a little more today.

2 – PEMBROKE MORGAN – Got shuffled back to 6th last week then rallied late, not a bad line at all. Hasn't won in a while, but can definitely be a factor in here today.

3 – MIDNIGHT ZETTE – He makes the race tough to handicap thanks to his last line. He won in this class at 13-1 two starts ago, then was bet to 2-1 as the favorite the next week, made an outside move, then faded to 9th. He took last week off and returns today.

4 – WHEELS A TURNING – Got away second and held that spot the whole way around the track last week. He can use his early speed to hopefully get into a similar spot this week. He can definitely be on the ticket again.

5 – MASSIVE RISK – I liked this one last week but the trip didn't work out that all that well. Used some early speed but then lacked room late. She's worth another look today.

6 – BAD RENTORS – This one has struggled in recent weeks, with nothing better than an 8th place finish in the last 5 pari-mutuel races. She will be a longshot again this week.

7 – STRITCH – Purchased at auction and brought back to The Meadows in a new barn since the last start. Drops from the NW 5 class to the conditioned claimer. Won her last start in a similar race, although this group is one notch above where she got her win. She can definitely fit the bill in this class.

8 – J-S JESSES GIRL – Used her gate speed last week but was parked early and faded a bit late. If she tries for the front again, she will need an easier first quarter mile.

SELECTIONS: 5-7-2-4

RACE 3 – NW 3500 PACE

1 – HERE COMES STUBBIE – Changes classes today, switching from the 20,000 conditioned claimer to the NW3500 level. Put in an impressive effort last time, parked for the mile but still finishing in the top-3. He should be able to contend in this level .

2 – CYRUS SEELSTER – Rallied late to get third last week, his best finish in a while. He's a classy veteran, so you can never count him out, but he will need a perfect trip in here to get a win today. Still, he can be on the ticket again.

3 – KINGS BEACH – Strong mile last week from the outside post, nearly taking the field wire to wire. Just got caught late, but it was still a good mile, and he can win today if the trip and fractions work in his favor.

4 – MARVALOUS TOWN – He's been a longshot in recent weeks and will likely be a longshot again today, but he is coming off his best finish in a while, only losing by less than 4 lengths.

5 – THREE RIVERS DELL – Ignore the last start, as he had post 9. Moves to a much better post today, and hopefully will be able to work out a decent trip. Still, he will be a higher price.

6 – R N NATE – Dropped to this class last time out and raced well, despite the 6th place finish. Used some early speed to hold his position out of the gate, then moved first-over and battled, before tiring a bit in the final quarter. A better trip today could land him on the ticket.

7 – AL'S BRIEFS – Newcomer from the Midwest has been off a little over 3 weeks, and hasn't been better than 8th in the last three starts. However, he joins a new barn today, so it's hard to know how well prepped he may be for today's race. Does have 4 wins this year and a fast mark in Illinois.

8 – BROOKLYN FLIGHT – He raced well last week, but was simply too far back early to make an impact late. Today, the same thing could happen, as he gets the outside post. He has some gate speed, but if he chooses to use it, will need to avoid an early speed battle.

SELECTIONS: 3-6-1-2

RACE 4 – NW 7500 PACE

1 – MARVALOUS ARTIST – Had his three race win streak ended, but he finished a strong second in a higher level than today's group. Moves to the inside post and will definitely be a major factor in here today.

2 – MATTAMERICAN – He's down one class from last week, but still two classes higher than where he won 2 starts ago. He's faced much tougher in his career, and has the back class to be good in this group today. I think he can get the win in here.

3 – MAYTIME TERROR – Hasn't fared well since moving up to this class two starts ago. Left the gate last week but was quickly covered up. From there, he lost ground and positions in the final half mile. He'll be a price today.

4 – BELIEVEINTHESPIRIT – Claimed for 15,000 last time at Philly, joins his new barn and comes to a new track today. His other recent starts have been in similar classes to today's group, and his best finish was a second in late October. Only has one win this year, so he'll likely be a longshot to get the win, but could hit the ticket.

5 – HUDSONANDBERNARD – He's a bit of a mystery today after last week's scratch. Has had a good season and continues to finish in the top-4 weekly, but the big question today is how he'll bounce back after the scratch.

6 – IMIDEAL HANOVER – Made his return last week after 7 weeks off. Should improve this week in his second start back, but moves to an outside post position.

7 – VALIANT IVY – Jumped to this level last week after winning his way out of the conditioned claiming ranks. Got away mid-pack, then was shuffled back to 7th before rallying late to get fourth. It wasn't a bad first effort in this level, but today moves to the outside post. He seems to be better when he gets out of the gate, but that won't be easy from this post.

SELECTIONS: 2-1-6-5

RACE 5 – 7000-8000 CLAIMING PACE

1 – BONFIRE BLISS – Drops back to the 7000 level today and moves to an inside post. Shows two recent starts in this class, a win and a second. Logically, he's a major factor in here today.

2 – CAPITAL ACCOUNT – Claimed for 7000 a few weeks ago. Followed with a third place finish, but last week faded to 8th after getting away third. Moves to a better post this week.

3 – CABO REAL – Only has one win this year, and comes off another 9th place finish last week. He will likely be a longshot in here today.

4 – COLOSSAL – Fared pretty well in the 10,000 level but then dropped back to this group a few weeks ago. He figured to be very good in here based on the other lines but success has been limited. He's had bad posts the last couple of weeks, so today he should be better.

5 – DANCE LIFE WELL – Likely favorite in here after bouncing back with a win last week. He's now won two of his three starts since joining the Rhoades Stable. He's a closer, so he'll be at the mercy of the fractions, which is the downside to him.

6 – INCREDIBLE DRAGON – Lost by 15 lengths last week from an inside post, not a good sign for today. He'll be a higher price.

7 – THISWAYORTHEHIGHWAY – Has been racing very well, with a win and three 3rd place finishes in his last four starts. Has some early speed and some closing ability. The problem today is the post – this is the worst post he's drawn in a while. Even at Northfield he drew a decent second-tier starting spot. This will be a challenge for him.

8 – STARRY NITE TEEN – Came a long way to get 4th last time after sitting 9th at the ¾ pole. It was a very strong final quarter, and possibly a sign that he's improving and ready for a big mile. However, the post works against him again this week.

9 – NATURALLY BAD – Draws the outside post for the second straight week. Finished 7th last time around and the prospects for today aren't great. He'll be a high price.

SELECTIONS: 5-1-4-7

RACE 6 – NW 5 TROT

1 – SOME MORE PRINCE – Sat at the back of the pack last week and showed a lot of late trot. It was a very good mile for him, and today he moves to an inside post. He had the rail two starts ago and got to the early lead, which is rare for a trotter from post 1. He's a big factor in here today.

2 – MISS LADY HALFMOON – Newcomer shows 2 wins in his last four starts in Indiana. Auction purchase joins the Stillings barn today and could be ready to win at first asking, despite missing 3 weeks. We'll learn more about him today.

3 – PERFECT SUMMER K – I like this one's chances to win in here. Raced very well last week, cutting the fractions and just got caught in the final strides. Posted a very good win in a lower level two starts ago, so he's in very good form right now.

4 – DANCE HALL BOUNCER – Was scratched last week, so he'll make his Meadows debut today. He was parked in his last start at Hoosier, so he's had a rough month of November. Has 5 wins this year, but has struggled recently, and will likely be a step or two short since he hasn't raced in 3 weeks.

5 – BONE A FIDE BABE – Comes off a 6th place finish last time, but was only 2 ¼ lengths back at the wire. Has good closing speed, but from post 5 I wouldn't be shocked if she left the gate a bit today.

6 – SCRAMBLE CAMP – Took last week off after a 5th place finish two weeks ago. Today will be his second start on Lasix, and he trotted a better final quarter with Lasix last time. He could be a factor in here today with a closing trip.

7 – MAYFAIR WELL – Newcomer spent most of the season in Indiana, but went to Dayton last week and shows a "dx" which is a driver break – not the horse's fault. Ignore that line completely. Two starts ago, he was a wire to wire winner in a lower level. We'll see how he fits today in a new class at a new track.

8 – TOM CATTIN – Has plenty of early speed, and used it to his advantage last time, with another top-3 finish. He's in very good form right now, and will likely use his gate speed again today.

9 – RAINBOWINTHEWEST – Won in the NW4 class two starts ago, and finished 5th in his debut in this class last week. He took a tough route, battled, and while he faded to 5th, he actually gained ground in the stretch. I would have picked him on the ticket today from a better post.

SELECTIONS: 3-1-6-8

RACE 7 – 10,000 CLAIMING PACE

1 – LUCKY MILLIONAIRE – Stays in the 10,000 level today, but lost last week by more than 22 lengths. He'll be a high price.

2 – TWIN B WRANGLER – Moved up to this class last week and responded with a win. He's put in one good effort after another this fall, and he's likely to be a factor in here again today.

3 – JK ONAROLL – Changes barns today to the Rhoades Stable after a second place finish last week in this class. Both of his starts in the claiming ranks have been good, so he'll command a lot of respect in this group today.

4 – DRUNK ON YOU – Comes off a scratch last time, so it's hard to predict how he will be today. Not only is he coming off a scratch, but he hasn't raced in this class in recent start. Won in the 7000 level with ease, then jumped two classes and held his own in the 12,500 ranks. Today will be his first start in for a 10,000 tag in recent weeks.

5 – DOCTOR RJ – Got off to a slow start from the rail last time, but made a good move in the final half mile. The rail may not have been the best place for him, and today he moves back to a middle post. He can use his early speed in here.

6 – ALBIONKINGINFINITO – Lost by 15 last week, and hasn't been in the top-3 in quite some time. He will be a longshot.

7 – GOODY TWO SOCKS – Shows two local starts, both of which were in a conditioned race. While the purse today is similar, I believe this class will be a little easier for him. He needs the class relief, as he hasn't been better than 9th in his two local starts.

8 – NATHAN FEELSGOOD – Drops back to the 10,000 level today after a 6th place finish in a higher group. Has some gate speed, but the last time he tried to use it he was parked for the mile. Still, he could try to go for the front today, it's not out of the question.

9 – LOW CARD – Makes his second start back in town after spending the summer in Massachusetts. Only has one win this year, and faces a tough task today from the outside post. Had some support on the tote board last week, but the post is the big obstacle today.

10 – FINAL JUSTICE – Goes back to the claiming ranks today after a 9th place finish in the NW3500 class. Draws the second tier starting spot this week, so he'll need to work out a trip.

SELECTIONS: 3-2-5-4

RACE 8 – PREFERRED PACE

1 – LORD OF WINTERFELL – Draws the same post in basically the same field this week. Finished 5th last week with a bit of a late rally, with a strong final quarter.

2 – IDEAL ACE – Hasn't finished higher than 4th in this class, so he'll likely be a longshot again. Just appears to be a bit overmatched in this class.

3 – HAWK'S RED CHIEF – Finished 4th in this group last time, making an outside move in the third quarter. He's in good form right now, but just doesn't seem to have the speed of some of the others in here.

4 – DAPPER DUDE – He's always a factor in this level, and is moving back to the top group after a win in a lower level. However, his last race was October 27, so he's been off a month. He'll likely be a step or two short today.

5 – PHOENIX WARRIOR N – Got caught late last time, despite a 30-second 2nd quarter. He still paced home in 55.4 on a sloppy track, so even though he didn't get the win last week, he's still a major factor in here today.

6 – WINDSONG LEO – Very sharp, as he picked up his 18th win of the year last week. He's now won 2 in a row and can certainly make it three straight. He'll need to use his early speed again, and will likely be the favorite today.

SELECTIONS: 5-6-3

RACE 9 – NW 7500 PACE

1 – LYONS KING – Won last week, but was claimed and moves up in class today for his new barn. He'll be tested today, especially since his win was only by a neck in a lower level. He does draw well, which certainly doesn't hurt.

2 – TERRORIFICVELOCITY – Finished third last time, but lost ground to the winner in a 54.4 final half mile. That was 2 weeks ago, as he didn't race last week. Has early speed and an inside post, so he deserves a bit of a look today.

3 – BOBBY K HILL – Raced very well in his local debut, especially considering he hadn't raced in about 6 weeks. He was an auction purchase and looked great for the new connections. Look for him to be even stronger today.

4 – STIRLING ESCORT – Made a tough outside move last time in a lower level. Raced well, but steps up in class today and will likely be racing from mid-pack. He'll need to draw some live cover.

5 – REAL PEACE – The only question last week is how fast that mile would have been under better weather conditions. It likely could have been one of the fastest miles all year locally, if not the fastest. I can't pick against him today after that mile.

6 – GD WESTERN JOE – Put in another good mile last week, but couldn't even come close to his stablemate's big move in the third quarter. He tired in the stretch and was bearing out, which led to a disqualification from second. He can be a top-3 finisher again, but won't be the favorite this week.

7 – ONE BAD NIGHT – Comes off a good win last time, but jumps two classes this week. He shows 3 recent starts at this level, with a best finish of third. He'll likely race from the back today.

8 – INDIGO ART – Like #7, this one won in a lower classification a week ago and jumps two classes today. He'll be a higher price and could have a tough time working out a trip.

SELECTIONS: 5-3-6-1

RACE 10 – NW 3500 PACE

1 – STARHIMUP – Had a ton of late pace, and was weaving between horses trying to find room last week. He can definitely win this race today if he has as much pace as he did last week.

2 – JUMPIN JAKE FLASH – Raced very well at Northfield last week despite being off a couple of weeks due to a scratch. His previous Meadows effort was an 8th place finish, but that was from post 9 and he was pushed early. He should do well in here.

3 – DEALIN DAN – Makes his second start back after missing more than 4 months. Should improve a bit today. Merriman will drive this week, his 6th different driver the last 6 times behind a gate.

4 – P H KENNY – Made a tough move last week into the third quarter. Lost a position coming home, but held well, only losing by a length and $\frac{3}{4}$. He can definitely be a factor in here today.

5 – FOUR CARD MAJOR – Got caught up in a very quick mile in a higher level last week, and paced in 1:53.4 Gets the drop back to the NW3500 level today, and was third in this class two weeks ago off a three-wide trip. He'll be a factor late.

6 – ZONE BLITZ – Drops to the bottom conditioned race this week for the first time in a long time. Had a second tier starting spot in a higher level last week, so I'll completely ignore that line. I like his chances quite a bit in here today.

7 – CRANKIN' IT UP – Finished 4th in this class last week, cutting the fractions. It was his first start in a new barn, so look for a bit of improvement today in the second effort.

8 – TSM CRUSIN USA – Hasn't been better than 6th since arriving from Pocono. He'll be a longshot in here today.

SELECTIONS: 6-1-4-2

RACE 11 – 10,000-12,500 CLAIMING TROT

1 – WHOTOOKSAM – Comes off his best line in a long time, a late rally up the inside to get third last week. His last 2 lines have been better, so he could be a factor in here today, but will still likely be one of the longer shots. Could provide some value.

2 – DRIFT AWAY – He's just not as sharp as he was earlier in the fall, when he went into double-figures in wins for the year. He's been a beaten favorite the last 2 weeks, and will likely take a decent amount of play today, but I doubt he will be the top choice again.

3 – ISABELLA HANOVER – She had missed over 3 weeks prior to her last start, yet still fired out of the gate. She finished 7th, but only lost the race by 2 ½ lengths, so it wasn't a bad effort at all. She should be stronger today, and gets a better post.

4 – PEMBROKE BADA BING – Raced well in his debut for the new barn last week, rallying late and only losing by ¾ of a length. That was in a conditioned race, and today he moves back to the claimer as he would have had to move up in class due to earnings in conditioned company. He'll be a factor in the stretch.

5 – KRISTY'SGINGERGAL – Won in the tough NW5 class just a month ago, but has made breaks in her last 2 starts. Today she drops to the claimer. It's hard to tell how she will fit with this group, but today I would expect a conservative effort as the main goal will be to keep her on stride throughout the mile.

6 – COUNTRY PROPHET – Made a huge move in the second quarter last week, then nearly held on late. It was his second straight narrow loss. If he can work out a trip, he can win today.

7 – MUTINYONTHEBOUNTY – This one has now won 3 in a row in this class. Was hard-used early last week then had enough to pass #6 Country Prophet in the stretch last time. Today he gets another outside post, so look for a similar trip.

SELECTIONS: 6-7-2-4

RACE 12 – 12,500-15,000 CLAIMING PACE

1 – LOUIE'S SO BOSSY – He's been struggled since the claim a few weeks ago, and Lasix hasn't picked him up much. Moves to an inside post today, so perhaps that will help him a bit.

2 – CARMENS BEST – Palone sticks with this one today despite the break last week. He obviously has the talent to contend here, as he was the even money favorite last time, but he comes with a level of risk today due to the break.

3 – RIP THIS JOINT – Palone opted off this one, another one that made a break last week. However, this one made the break at a different track, so I'm expecting him to be fine now that he's back home. He was an easy winner in this class in his last local appearance, so he should be a contender today.

4 – UNCLE COZ – Rawlings opted off this one, so he'll get his third different driver in 3 weeks today. Went right to the front last week but lost positions from there, finishing 7th. However, he was only 3 ¾ lengths back at the wire, so the whole group was bunched closely. He'll need the right trip today.

5 – SUPERFICIAL – Made up some ground in the final quarter last time, but only managed a 5th place finish after finishing second in here two weeks ago. He seemed to be a bit better when he got out of the gate quickly.

6 – INNOCENT VICTIM – Changes classes today back to the claiming ranks, but hasn't been better than 6th in the last several starts. He'll be a longshot.

7 – VIP BAYAMA – Just missed by a neck in his debut for the new barn last week, and that was after missing a week due to a scratch. He's a contender today.

8 – I'M FEELIN GOOD – Finished 8th in his last effort, then was scratched last week. Draws outside today, so he will be a high price.

9 – VODKA IS TERROR – Came a long way to get third last week, a very good effort after dropping in class. The big question today is whether he will take a conservative route early as he did last week, or whether he will try to mix things up and use some early speed. If the trip works out, he can definitely be on the ticket in here.

SELECTIONS: 2-3-7-4

RACE 13 – NW 5 PACE

1 – MR BILL G – Comes off back to back wins, but both were in the NW 1 level. He steps up two classes today and will be tested. Draws the inside, which helps, but others in here have shown more speed.

2 – ROCKNROLL CHARM – Moves to an inside post today, but hasn't fared well in this class since moving up after a win in NW2 company. He will be a price today.

3 – DRAWING DRAGONS – Only has one win this year, but comes off a competitive line last week where he sat the pocket and finished second. He should be able to step out of the gate again today and hopefully work out a similar trip.

4 – HEZASHININGKNIGHT – Finished 5th last time, and was unable to hold his position coming home. He'll need a stronger final quarter mile today.

5 – NAILED IT – Cut a very fast quarter on a sloppy track last week in his local debut. He got an easier second quarter, but the damage was done at that point. It's too early to say he can't go with this class, so you need to give him another try today.

6 – SCRUB HANOVER – Has one good line in the last four, but he's hard to predict, so it's not out of the question for him to pop up with a better mile today. I wouldn't look for him to win, but he could hit the ticket at a price.

7 – CHARMING ACE – Recent purchase is now 1-for-1 locally, an easy 6-length win last week. However, that was from an inside post in a conditioned claimer. Today he moves up in class sharply and gets a tougher post.

8 – CIRRUS DE VIE – Showed a bit of late pace last week. He definitely knows how to win, with 17 career victories, mostly at the fairs. Post hurts, as he'll likely need a more conservative trip early and see what he can get late.

9 – BAY MEADOWS – Won his local debut last week in the NW2 level at a 7-2 price. He raced well in that effort, but today he moves up in class and shifts to the worst post. He'll be tested today for sure.

10 – SIN CITY BOOGIE – This one had plenty of late pace up the inside last week, and possibly could have finished second if he had a clear path. Today, he'll be looking for someone in the front row to help him get away mid-pack at best, and then look for him to get to the outside with cover. If the fractions up front are swift enough, he can win.

SELECTIONS: 10-3-5-7-8