

# SANTA ANITA ANALYSIS



BY BRAD FREE

## BEST BET: RACE 5, AMERICAN ANTHEM

### FIRST RACE

Cal-bred maidens sprint down the hill; the field is loaded with speed. That might compromise second-start speed-ball **MOR CANDY**, who ran well on dirt last month. He broke from the rail, dueled though a hot pace and split the field in a race that saw the 1-2 finishers rally from the back. **MOR CANDY** is bred for grass (Twirling Candy progeny win 20 percent on turf). With that race under his belt and favorable outside draw, he might ration his speed more effectively. **NAP LAJOIE** improved his second start, runner-up on dirt after setting a strong pace. His pedigree suggests turf will be okay. Like the top choice, **NAP LAJOIE** must ration his speed. This would be a good spot to try to do just that. (Trivia: Nap Lajoie is named after the late-1800s-early-1900s Hall of Fame baseball player whose nickname was "The Frenchman." The horse will be ridden Flavien Prat, a Frenchman.) **INSUBORDINATION** is the speed of the speed. He wheeled back on less than two weeks' rest last out, and finished nowhere after setting the pace. But his third-place finish on this course in April gives him a license to steal it.

### SECOND RACE

**PIONEER LAD** chased good maidens his first two starts this winter, in the money both times while finishing behind subsequent graded stakes-placed Law Abidin Citizen and Sonneteer. 'LAD changed trainers since raced, makes his first start for Richard Baltas, and should return an improved colt following a two and one-half month layoff. First-time starter **CAPTAIN CHAOS** is a son of Tapit, and the first named foal from G1-winning sprinter Last Full Measure. 'CHAOS was almost ready to debut last summer as a 2yo, but was sidelined before he ran. His San Luis Rey Downs workouts for Peter Miller look solid; he should come out firing. **OMEGA MOON** debuts for Bob Baffert, with a healthy work pattern. Sired by Malibu Moon, he was produced by debut winner-G2 sprinter Alpha Kitten. As a broodmare, her only foal to start is Major League, a debut winner one year ago in a maiden special-weight at Oaklawn Park. The point is, **OMEGA MOON** is bred to win early.

### THIRD RACE

**AMERICAN PASTIME** would have been a contender in the G3 Barrera (race 5), but his team will take at path of less resistance and develop the colt gradually before jumping into the deep end. The debut by 'PASTIME suggested he could become a top sprinter. He was well-bet, pressed a fast pace, cruised by more than four lengths and won "ridden out." It was a super debut; subsequent workouts have been sharp. He faces a challenging pace scenario however, because this race is loaded with heat. Still, the only 3yo in the field has a bright future. **STORMY ROCIT** returns to dirt and drops to N1X/optional \$40k claiming after a speed-and-fade N2X on turf. His runner-up finish two starts back at six furlongs, after setting a blazing pace, makes him a theft candidate shortening to five and a half. **ALLEY BOSS** probably will be outrun for the lead, which would be fine. If the pacesetters knock each other out, **ALLEY BOSS** could be the opportunistic upsetter from just off the pace.

### FOURTH RACE

**CISTRON** enters this turf sprint for 3yos with a decided advantage in class and seasoning. He is the only multiple winner, and the only stakes winner. Most others merely have won maiden races. **CISTRON** has a front-running style around two turns that suggests sprinting on turf will be fine. Last-out winner of a \$150k stakes at Oaklawn Park, he can fire right back with a front-running or pace-pressing trip from a favorable outside post. **CITY STORM** was gelded prior to his March 2 comeback, and proceeded to score a solid maiden-race upset. The competition was dubious, but it was only the second career start for **CITY STORM**. His pedigree suggests he could be something. Sired by City Zip, his second dam is a sibling to A.P. Indy and Summer Squall. **ARMS RUNNER**, sibling to graded-stakes winner Calculator, won his debut with a good number despite racing greenly in the lane. He defeated Kopitar by nearly three lengths; **CITY STORM** defeated that rival by only a length and a half.

### FIFTH RACE

Former Kentucky Derby candidate **AMERICAN ANTHEM** drops in class and shortens to a sprint after two route losses against better. Perhaps he had legitimate alibis for both defeats. He lost a shoe and finished next-to-last at Oaklawn Park, and then got chewed up dueling on fast pace in the Santa Anita Derby. It's not like trainer Bob Baffert to wheel a horse back off a pair of resounding losses unless the horse is doing well; subsequent works suggest **AMERICAN ANTHEM** fits the description. He proved in his debut that he can rally from behind to win a sprint; that is the trip he figures for here. Off the pace and into the winner's circle, notwithstanding the rail post. **KIMBEAR** ran better than the line looks in the Santa Anita Derby, sixth of 13 after losing position early. He shortens to a sprint and returns to the seven-furlong distance at which he crushed maidens two starts back (including race-2 selection Pioneer Lad). **ARISTOCRATIC** dominated the six-furlong San Pedro Stakes by more than four lengths after setting a fast pace. He probably is the one to catch. He changed trainers again last week, and runs this time for Simon Callaghan.

### SIXTH RACE

**GOSOFAR**, a 4yo maiden making the sixth start of his career, is only a tepid choice in this Cal-bred maiden turf sprint. His last-out runner-up finish was the best race of his career; he will be forwardly placed on a course that has been kind to forwardly placed runners. **CHATTERMAN** clipped heels soon after the start and lost all chance in his local debut, yet rallied to finish second when the pace collapsed. Good effort by an improving 3yo making only the third start of his career. He is a sibling to three Turf Paradise stakes winners. **PATIENCE OFA SAINT** finished only a neck behind the top choice last out, while **CHEEKABOOMBOOM** is first-time Flavien Prat and will rally late.

### SEVENTH RACE

**INFORMALITY** was not disgraced either recent start on dirt against maiden-40 starter allowance types; he drops one more level to \$25k claiming N2L and switches to Prat. **JUSTONETIMEBABY** was in tough last out in a starter allowance that unfolded at a blistering pace. 'BABY never got close. The splits are likely to be slower in this N2L; his maiden win two back puts him in the hunt. **DRAMATIC ANGEL** returns from an eight-month layoff. His runner-up comeback last summer at Del Mar, at this class level, stamps him as another logical contender. Trainer Jaime Gomez and jockey Vinnie Bednar popped twice here recently with horses returns from long layoffs (Call the Queen, off 188 days; and La Galy, off 236 days).

### EIGHTH RACE

**TANNERS PRIDE** drops for the first time to Cal-bred maiden-50; his third-place finish two starts back in his most recent on the main track would probably be good enough. **HEDESITINSTYLE** dueled and tired in his creditable debut, fifth against special-weight Cal-breds. Second time out, speed to flee the rail, he is a contender on the front end. **MIZTER KOOL CAT** drops in class, shortens to a sprint and should be forwardly placed. First-time starter **MY BOY RUDY** makes his debut for a trainer-jockey combo that won with both maiden-claiming first-time starters they teamed with the past five years (\$19.40 Talbot Road in March 2015; \$12 Goodbye Rosalina in March 2014).

### NINTH RACE

**SALSITA** should win this N1X/optional claiming turf mile. She won the last three times she raced at the \$40k claiming or N1X level; her recent figures tower over the field. On paper, the veteran mare (8-for-33) is a standout. However, the upstart 3yo **BLAME IT ON ALPHIE** still has her career in front of her. She won her debut last summer at Del Mar, two turns on turf, finished fourth in a stake, and then went to the sidelines. She returns with a conspicuous pattern of four bullet works, which is uncharacteristic from this stable. Furthermore, she has a big pedigree. Sired by Blame, she is a sibling to stakes winners Twentytwentysix, Unusual Heatwave and Alphonse's Bet. The point is, the best is yet to come for the 3yo filly. **ARETHUSA** proved last summer she runs well fresh when runner-up in a similar N1X turf route. This is her first start August.