



TWO-YEAR-OLD BETTING GUIDE

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BELMONT PARK STAKES SCHEDULE

Date	Race	Grade	Purse	Restrictions	Surface	Distance
Friday, Jul 21	Lake George	III	\$150,000	F3YO	Turf	1 1/16
Saturday, Oct 07	Belmont Turf Sprint Invitational		\$150,000	3&UP	Turf	6 Furlongs
Saturday, Oct 07	Champagne	I	\$500,000	2YO	Dirt	1 Mile
Saturday, Oct 07	Hill Prince	III	\$500,000	3YO	Turf	1 1/8
Saturday, Oct 07	Jockey Club Gold Cup Invitational	I	\$750,000	3&UP	Dirt	1 1/4
Sunday, Oct 08	Flower Bowl	I	\$500,000	F&M 3&UP	Turf	1 1/4
Sunday, Oct 08	Frizette	I	\$400,000	F2YO	Dirt	1 Mile
Monday, Oct 09	Knickerbocker	II	\$200,000	3&UP	Turf	1 1/8
Saturday, Oct 14	Futurity	III	\$150,000	2YO	Dirt	6 Furlongs
Saturday, Oct 14	Pebbles		\$200,000	F3YO	Turf	1 Mile
Sunday, Oct 15	Matron	III	\$150,000	F2YO	Dirt	6 Furlongs
Saturday, Oct 21	Empire Classic (NYB)		\$300,000	3&UP	Dirt	1 1/8
Saturday, Oct 21	Empire Distaff (NYB)		\$250,000	F&M 3&UP	Dirt	1 1/16
Saturday, Oct 21	Hudson (NYB)		\$150,000	3&UP	Dirt	6 1/2 Furlongs
Saturday, Oct 21	Iroquois (NYB)		\$150,000	F&M 3&UP	Dirt	6 1/2 Furlongs
Saturday, Oct 21	Maid of the Mist (NYB)		\$250,000	F2YO	Dirt	1 Mile
Saturday, Oct 21	Mohawk (NYB)		\$200,000	3&UP	Turf	1 1/16
Saturday, Oct 21	Sleepy Hollow (NYB)		\$250,000	2YO	Dirt	1 Mile
Saturday, Oct 21	Ticonderoga (NYB)		\$200,000	F&M 3&UP	Turf	1 1/16
Sunday, Oct 22	English Channel		\$100,000	3YO	Turf	1 Mile
Saturday, Oct 28	Athenia	III	\$200,000	F&M 3&UP	Turf	1 1/16
Saturday, Oct 28	Awad		\$100,000	2YO	Turf	1 Mile
Saturday, Oct 28	Bold Ruler	III	\$200,000	3&UP	Dirt	7 Furlongs
Saturday, Oct 28	Turnback the Alarm	III	\$200,000	F&M 3&UP	Dirt	1 1/16
Sunday, Oct 29	Chelsey Flower		\$100,000	F2YO	Turf	1 Mile
Sunday, Oct 29	Pumpkin Pie		\$100,000	F&M 3&UP	Dirt	6 Furlongs



AT A GLANCE

A look at the previous full Belmont Park meet: April 28, 2017 through July 16, 2017

AVG. WINNING ODDS: 4.85 – 1

FAVORITE WIN%: 40% **FAVORITE ITM%:** 73%

EXOTICS	PAYOFF
Quinella	27.95
Exacta	69.99
Daily Double	74.69
Trifecta	485.92
Pick 3	505.61
Superfecta	2,655.65
Pick 6	33,387.71
Pick 4	4,746.31
Pick 5	21,364.90
Grand Slam	114.61



TRACK BIAS MEET (04/28 – 07/16)

Distance	# Race	% Wire	Best Style	Best Posts
6.0fDirt	86	35%	E	Mid/Out
6.5fDirt	45	24%	E/P	Middle
1 MileDirt	33	21%	E/P	Outside
InTf Sprint	47	26%	P	Rail
Turf Sprint	58	19%	P	Rail/Ins
InTf Routes	64	27%	E	Rail
Turf Routes	65	17%	S	Rail

TRACK BIAS WEEK (07/10 – 07/16)

Distance	# Race	% Wire	Best Style	Best Posts
6.0fDirt	14	36%	E	Mid/Out
6.5fDirt	2	50%	P	Middle
1 MileDirt	1	0%	E/P	Rail/Ins
InTf Sprint	4	25%	E/P	Rail/Ins
Turf Sprint	9	22%	P	Rail/Ins
InTf Routes	7	29%	E/P	Middle
Turf Routes	3	0%	E/P	Mid/Out

WHO'S HOT, WHO'S NOT

HOT TRAINERS	Starts	Wins	Place	Show	Avg. Odds	Winning Favorites	'16-'17 Win %
Englehart Jeremiah C.	12	4	3	1	8.05	2	24%
Ryerson James T.	7	3	0	2	12.65	0	7%
Jacobson David	5	2	0	1	6.05	0	17%
Lynch Brian A.	5	2	0	0	10.56	0	17%
Bush Thomas M.	6	2	2	0	24.01	1	14%

HOT JOCKEYS	Starts	Wins	Place	Show	Avg. Odds	Winning Favorites	'16-'17 Win %
Rosario Joel	17	8	2	0	5.38	1	17%
Alvarado Junior	12	3	1	1	16.05	2	14%

COLD JOCKEYS	Starts	Wins	Place	Show	Avg. Odds	Beaten Favorites	'16-'17 Win %
Reyes Luis R.	10	0	1	2	47.06	1	5%

CHAMPAGNE TRENDS

by Kellie Reilly

When probing for recent trends in the Champagne S. (G1), two key points emerge. It's not surprising that juveniles who raced at Saratoga are well represented on the honor roll, but the actual statistic – 16 of the past 20 winners – is impressive. So is the emphasis on entering in peak form, with 17 in this span coming off a win in their prior start.

In fact, the last 10 Champagne winners were all exiting a victory. The most recent to rebound from a loss was Scat Daddy (2006), second in the Hopeful (G1) prior to his Champagne. Greenwood Lake (1999) had likewise been runner-up in the Futurity (G1), while Birdstone (2003) was the only winner in the past two decades who had failed to make the trifecta in his previous start, having finished fourth in the Hopeful.

The Hopeful has produced no fewer than six Champagne winners in the last 14 years. Unlike Scat Daddy and Birdstone, the other four had all won the Hopeful – First Samurai (2005), Vineyard Haven (2008), Shanghai Bobby (2012), and Practical Joke (2016).

Other Spa alumni to take the Champagne include Saratoga Special (G2) hero Union Rags (2011); War Pass (2007) and Proud Accolade (2004), debut winners who also added an entry-level allowance at Saratoga; Greenpointcrusader (2015), Havana (2013), and Uncle Mo (2010), all stepping up straight from maiden wins; The Groom Is Red (1998) and aforementioned Greenwood Lake, who broke their maidens at Saratoga before getting additional experience en route to the Champagne; A P Valentine (2000), third in his Saratoga premiere and subsequently a Belmont maiden winner; and

Grand Slam (1997), a Belmont debut winner, and Saratoga allowance runner-up, who captured the Futurity.

Over the past 10 years, the two winners who had not competed at Saratoga were Daredevil (2014) and Homeboykris (2009). Daredevil wasn't ready to start until Belmont in September, when romping in the mud, and he caught a sloppy track in the Champagne. Homeboykris, privately purchased following a maiden score at Calder, was making his first start for Rick Dutrow here.

But in the preceding decade, the two exceptions to the Saratoga rule were high-class juveniles. Southern California shipper Officer (2001) brought a sterling record with him, going unbeaten through four starts capped by the Del Mar Futurity (G2). The next year, Toccet (2002) entered in the wake of two routs at Laurel and Pimlico.

Although the Hopeful angle is of interest, stakes experience isn't a prerequisite overall. Champagne winners are evenly split, 10-10, between stakes newcomers and veterans. Six of the victorious stakes firsters came in the 2007-16 time frame, a slight uptick from the four in this category during the decade of 1997-2006.

Finally, two trainers in succession have had hot hands in this race. Hall of Famer Nick Zito won five Champagnes in 10 years (1998-2007), including three straight with The Groom Is Red, Greenwood Lake, and A P Valentine, followed at intervals by Birdstone and War Pass. More recently, Todd Pletcher has collected six Champagne trophies – Proud Accolade, Scat Daddy, Uncle Mo, and three in a row courtesy of Shanghai Bobby, Havana, and Daredevil.



BREEDERS' FUTURITY TRENDS

by Kellie Reilly

The Breeders' Futurity (G1) offers a couple of discernible trends over the past two decades. Juveniles with stakes experience are preferred, as 14 of the last 20 winners attest. An appearance at Saratoga is also a plus, with 11 winners having the Spa in their portfolio.

But we'll need to refine these stats by distinguishing the winners during the Polytrack era (2006-13). Seven of these eight entered with stakes experience – a higher proportion than we'll find for the dirt winners – and their background leans heavily toward synthetic or turf. Four of the Polytrack winners had competed at Saratoga, which better comports with their dirt counterparts.

We'll focus on the 12 dirt winners (1997-2005 and 2014-16) for more relevant pointers.

Stakes veterans still hold an edge on the dirt, but it's not lopsided as it was during the synthetic years.

Seven winners already had stakes experience, notably four alumni of the Hopeful (G1). Favorite Trick (1997) and Sky Mesa (2002) won Saratoga's premier two-year-old event, while Consolidator (2004) had been fourth, and Classic Empire (2016) unfortunately lost all chance when unseating his rider.

Two were coming off the Del Mar Futurity (G2) – Bob Baffert's duo of Captain Steve (1999) and Arabian Light (2000), both third in their summertime base's signature juvenile race.

The outlier among stakes veterans is Dawn of War (2005), who'd stayed in the Midwest. The winner of a minor stakes at Canterbury, and a distant second in the Cradle in his latest, he was ignored at 36-1 in the Breeders' Futurity.

Of the five stakes newcomers to win on the dirt, three were Saratoga maiden winners – Carpe Diem (2014), Eurosilver (2003), and Cat Thief (1998), who unlike the former two raced twice more before turning up at Keeneland. This trio, and the four from the Hopeful, make for a total of seven of 12 dirt winners seen at the Spa.

The other two maiden winners were Siphonic (2001), unveiled at Del Mar, and Brody's Cause (2015), who'd scored at Churchill. He's not the only one with Churchill on his resume, but the four others – Favorite Trick, Consolidator, Dawn of War, and Classic Empire – had graduated to stakes elsewhere. With Churchill now conducting a September meet, we may see more winners with a profile like Brody's Cause.

Only two of the 12 dirt winners had two-turn experience, Dawn of War and Brody's Cause. Both were trained by Dale Romans, who also saddled Dullahan (2011) on the Polytrack. With three wins in the last dozen years, Romans is the most successful trainer in the Breeders' Futurity since the turn of the millennium. Hall of Famer D. Wayne Lukas boasts a total of six, but none since Consolidator.



2-YEAR-OLD PREP RACES

by Alastair Bull

Believe it or not, the 2018 Kentucky Derby racetrack campaign has already begun.

With the beginning of 2-year-old stakes racing, some horses with the potential to be at Churchill Downs on the First Saturday in May next year are making their entrance onto the national stage. And though the best 2-year-old doesn't often win the Derby – since 1980, just three Eclipse Award-winning 2-year-old males have won the big one – they can provide a guide to likely Derby runners.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember regarding Kentucky Derby winners and juvenile racing is this: only one horse – Apollo in 1882 – has won the Derby without having raced as a 2-year-old. Some have got close, – they include 2012 runner-up Bodemeister, along with the third-place finishers in 2007 (Curlin) and 2017 (Battle of Midway) – but given that it's been 135 years since Apollo's victory, there's an extremely good chance the 2018 Derby winner will race at two.

Working out which horse that's likely to be is another matter. The most natural place to look are the biggest juvenile races, and a fair few Derby winners have run in those. But in the past 30 years, 11 of the Derby winners didn't contest any stakes races – 2017 winner Always Dreaming being the latest.

There have already been graded stakes races for juveniles this year – the Bashford Manor Stakes (G3) at Churchill Downs, the Best Pal Stakes (G2) at Del Mar, and the Sanford Stakes (G3) at Saratoga. But things really heat up in September, when the first races with points in the Road to the Kentucky Derby series are held.

The full make-up of the series hasn't been named as yet, but if it's similar to 2016, it begins with the Iroquois Stakes (G3) at Churchill Downs. From there, eight other U.S. juvenile races carry qualifying points: the Champagne Stakes (G1), FrontRunner Stakes (G1), Breeders' Futurity (G1), Breeders' Cup Juvenile (G1), Delta Downs Jackpot (G2), Kentucky Jockey Club Stakes (G2), Remsen Stakes (G2), and Los Alamitos Futurity (G1). All are 10-4-2-1 races bar the Breeders' Cup Juvenile, which is a 20-8-4-2 race.

Usually, some contestants from these races make an impact in the Derby. For example:

- two of the past three Derby winners (Nyquist and American Pharoah) won the FrontRunner Stakes;
- the 2016 Derby runner-up Exaggerator won the Delta Downs Jackpot and ran well in the Breeders' Futurity and Breeders' Cup Juvenile;

- Classic Empire, Lookin At Lee, and Practical Joke all finished in the first five in both the 2016 Breeders' Cup Juvenile and the 2017 Derby;
- the first two in the 2014 Los Alamitos Futurity, Dortmund and Firing Line, finished third and second, respectively, in the 2015 Derby.

However, the list of major juvenile race victors that then win the Derby in the past 30 years is a fairly small one. In addition, there have been horses that weren't that impressive as 2-year-olds, even in non-stakes races, that improved rapidly and become Derby horses.

The best thing to do when watching juvenile races with the Kentucky Derby in mind is to look for a horse that's likely to stay 1 1/4 miles in the Derby, a horse that looks to be improving, and a horse with solid BRIS speed figures and with good form lines from the horses it raced against.

If you want to place a bet on the Derby winner at the earliest possible time, then watching 2-year-old racing is a must. The first pool of the Kentucky Derby Future Wager comes at the end of November, after most of the major juvenile races have been run. Churchill Downs handicappers put 23 individual horses on the KDFW list, and offer a 24th option for "all others", which for the first pool is normally the favorite.

Since the first Future Wager pool was moved to November ahead of the 2014 Derby, two of the four winners (Nyquist and American Pharoah) were available as individual options, at odds of \$21.80 and \$27.60 respectively – much better than they paid on Derby day. It's a great opportunity to use what you learn from juvenile racing.



HANDICAPPING 2-YEAR-OLD RACES USING PEDIGREE

by Alastair Bull

As fall begins, one of the big focuses is on 2-year-old racing. It's important not only in itself, but because it gives potential clues to likely Kentucky Derby prospects.

Betting on them can look a little daunting, especially in maiden races, where many of the juveniles have not raced before.

Punters should consider the horse's workouts, whether its trainer has a high strike rate with juveniles, how it looks in the post parade, and if its odds are short on the day. However, a little pedigree analysis can be extremely helpful.

A pedigree won't tell you for certain whether a horse will be good or not. One thing the pedigree analysis can help you with, however, is the horse's likely aptitude; in this case, whether it's likely to have the maturity to run well at two.

This won't be foolproof: horses that don't appear to have a pedigree to be good as a 2-year-old may prove this wrong and run well. But it can be a useful guide.

These are some factors to consider:

Sire Statistics: Look at the list of leading sires of 2-year-olds, preferably over three seasons or so, and see if the sire of the horse you're looking at has a prominent position. You can also look at which sires regularly figure at the top of the list, in terms of earnings, winners, and stakes winners.

First-crop Sires: Most first-crop sires have had some progeny on the track already, and they may figure on the present

season's 2-year-old sire list. This won't be an ideal guide, as the sample size may be too small in some cases, but if they are well up the list, you may be encouraged.

Sire's race record: If the horse you're looking at is by a first-season sire that's had few runners to this point, see if that sire ran well as a 2-year-old, or if his pedigree features good 2-year-olds.

Dam's breeding record: If the dam of the horse you're looking at has had a few foals, look at whether those foals have performed as 2-year-olds. If some of them have, you may feel more confident about this horse's chances. However, also look at the sire of these previous foals – some may be better or worse at getting 2-year-olds than the current horse's sire.

If the horse was sold at auction, you can find most of this record at the sale company website. If not, try to find sale records of the mare's other progeny.

Dam's race record: Examine the racing performances of the 2-year-old's dam. If she had some 2-year-old speed, and/or if there is speed in her family and in her sire, you may feel more confident.

Distance: Make sure the statistics discussed above are relevant to the distance of the race. You may think twice about backing a juvenile that's racing 1 1/16 miles if the statistics surrounding the progeny of its sire or dam is dominated by six-furlong form.



FRONTRUNNER TRENDS

by Kellie Reilly

The FrontRunner (G1) has experienced a few changes over the past two decades, but one trend endures through them all: horses coming out of the Del Mar Futurity (G1) have an edge.

Known as the Norfolk from its 1970 inception through 2011, Santa Anita's feature for two-year-olds is traditionally staged over 1 1/16 miles on dirt. Those conditions were interrupted by brief stints at a mile (1997-2001) and on synthetic (2007-10).

Thirteen of the last 20 runnings have gone to Del Mar Futurity graduates. Only five in this span have won both – Nyquist (2015), American Pharoah (2014), Lookin at Lucky (2009), Flame Thrower (2000), and Souvenir Copy (1997). That stat might well have been higher, if seven Del Mar Futurity winners hadn't skipped this race. Of the eight Del Mar Futurity winners who tried and failed to follow up in the Norfolk/FrontRunner, six placed (five seconds and one third).

Over the past 20 years, eight Norfolk/FrontRunner winners were all improving from losses in the Del Mar Futurity, in part appreciating the stretch-out to two turns. Five – Creative Cause (2011), Jaycito (2010), Street Hero (2008), Stormello (2006), and Dixie Union (1999) – were turning the tables on the Del Mar Futurity winner. Three didn't get the chance to gain revenge in this spot – Dixie Chatter (2007), Roman Ruler (2004), and Kafwain (2002) – since the Del Mar Futurity heroes in their years didn't go for the double.

Now for a closer look at the seven Norfolk/FrontRunner winners who came by another way. Four prevailed in years when the Del Mar Futurity winner didn't run – Power Broker (2012), Brother Derek (2005), Essence of Dubai (2001), and Buck Trout (1998) – perhaps allowing for a more open race.

Of those seven, five already had stakes experience. Ruler's Court (2003) and Essence of Dubai competed in the local prep for the Del Mar Futurity, the Best Pal (G2). Brother Derek was third in the I'm Smokin for Cal-breds, Power Broker just missed in the Oak Tree Juvenile Turf, and Bond Holder (2013) had finished fifth in an ambitious career debut in the Hollywood Juvenile Championship.

Power Broker and Bond Holder brought vaguely similar profiles. Both entered as maidens, but with experience around two turns. Neither had the opportunity to race on dirt until the FrontRunner, and the surface switch brought out the best in them. Since Southern California's synthetic era has passed, their profiles may not be as instructive going forward.

Indeed, Power Broker is an outlier among Bob Baffert's record seven winners of this race. His other six (Souvenir Copy, Flame Thrower, Kafwain, Roman Ruler, Lookin at Lucky, American Pharoah) had all taken the tried-and-true path of the Del Mar Futurity.

That leaves two winners who were making their stakes debuts here straight out of maiden company, and both were simultaneously stepping up in distance. Buck Trout had placed in a pair of sprint maidens at Hollywood and Fairplex. Thus he rates as an anomaly on this list, as the only winner without a single appearance at Del Mar.

After Buck Trout, it took 18 more years for the next stakes debuter to prevail, Gormley (2016). A first-out winner at Del Mar, Gormley defied another trend by upending the top three finishers from the Del Mar Futurity in Klimt, Straight Fire, and Midnight Pleasure, respectively.



IROQUOIS TRENDS

by Kellie Reilly

One of the analytical angles I find most interesting is going back to look at the profiles of past winners of a certain race. If the race winners tend to have a trait in common, that trend can help to sift through the current contenders.

Saturday's Iroquois (G3) is a case in point, with one theme emerging: two-turn experience.

That stat makes sense since the Churchill Downs feature for two-year-olds was revamped in 2013. Moved up to the new September meet and extended to a two-turn, 1 1/16-mile affair as a Kentucky Derby (G1) points race, the Iroquois has rewarded runners with a route under their belts.

Three of the past four winners fit the pattern, two at big odds. Cleburne (2013) sprang a 34-1 surprise off a debut victory in a one-mile Ellis Park turf maiden, and Lucky Player (2014) went off at 11-1 after just missing in the Prairie Meadows Juvenile Mile. Last year, Not This Time exited a romp over a mile on the Ellis Park main track (which starts on a chute that links up with the clubhouse turn, and runners negotiate a bend into the backstretch). The lone exception in this time span is Cocked and Loaded (2015), who made up for it by being a battle-hardened stakes veteran making his fifth start in the Iroquois.

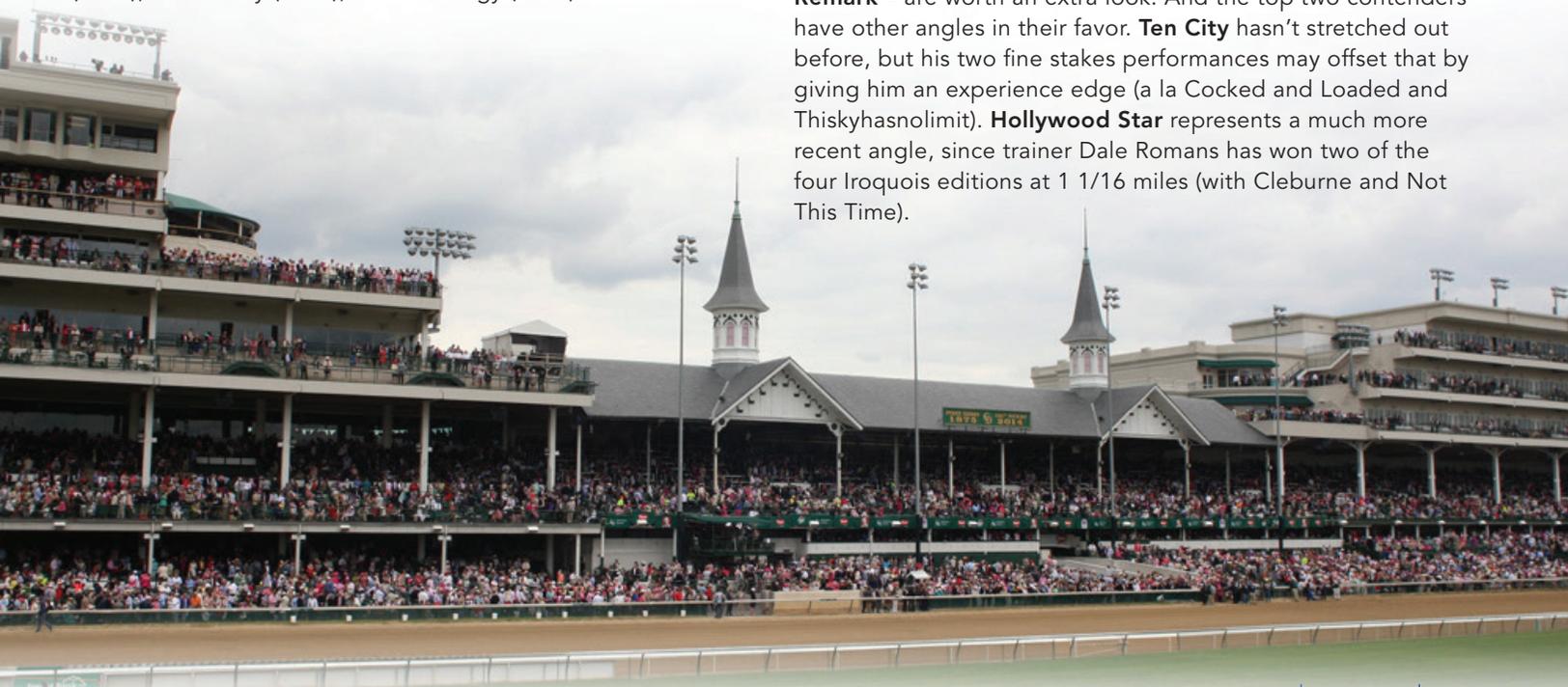
What's particularly interesting, however, is that two-turn experience was also a trend in the Iroquois in its former guise as a one-turn mile later on the calendar. Juveniles cutting back from longer races won four of the previous six editions. Three of them were exiting losses in two-turn stakes – Uncaptured (2012), Motor City (2011), and Astrology (2010) – while Court

Vision (2007) had just broken his maiden going 1 1/16 miles at Keeneland. The other two winners were Thiskyhasnolimit (2009), already tried twice in stakes company and making his fifth start here, and Capt. Candyman Can (2008), coming off a sixth in a messy Arlington-Washington Futurity (G3) contested around a similar one-turn mile.

If you go back to the prior decade of results (1997-2006), again seven of 10 Iroquois winners had the benefit of a two-turn race. The most popular angle was rebounding from defeats in the Breeders' Futurity (G1), with six following that path – Catcominatcha (2005), Straight Line (2004), The Cliff's Edge (2003), Harlan's Holiday (2001), Meetyouatthebrig (2000), and Mighty (1999). Keene Dancer (1997) arrived by a different way, having routed successfully in the El Joven on the Retama Park turf. The three exceptions in this group were all unbeaten coming in – Tiz Wonderful (2006), a first-out romper at Saratoga; Champali (2002), dominating in a Keeneland allowance; and Exploit (1998), a Del Mar debut and Santa Anita allowance winner shipping in for Bob Baffert.

Although favorites tended to prosper in that decade (seven of 10 off at 5-2 or less), the past 10 years have been more open to better-priced winners. Aside from the aforementioned Cleburne and Lucky Player, Cocked and Loaded (9-1), Uncaptured (9-2), Thiskyhasnolimit (13-1) and Court Vision (8-1) have furnished value.

So what might that history portend for Saturday? The trio with two-turn experience – **Pont du Gard**, **Tres Equis**, and **Smart Remark** – are worth an extra look. And the top two contenders have other angles in their favor. **Ten City** hasn't stretched out before, but his two fine stakes performances may offset that by giving him an experience edge (a la Cocked and Loaded and Thiskyhasnolimit). **Hollywood Star** represents a much more recent angle, since trainer Dale Romans has won two of the four Iroquois editions at 1 1/16 miles (with Cleburne and Not This Time).



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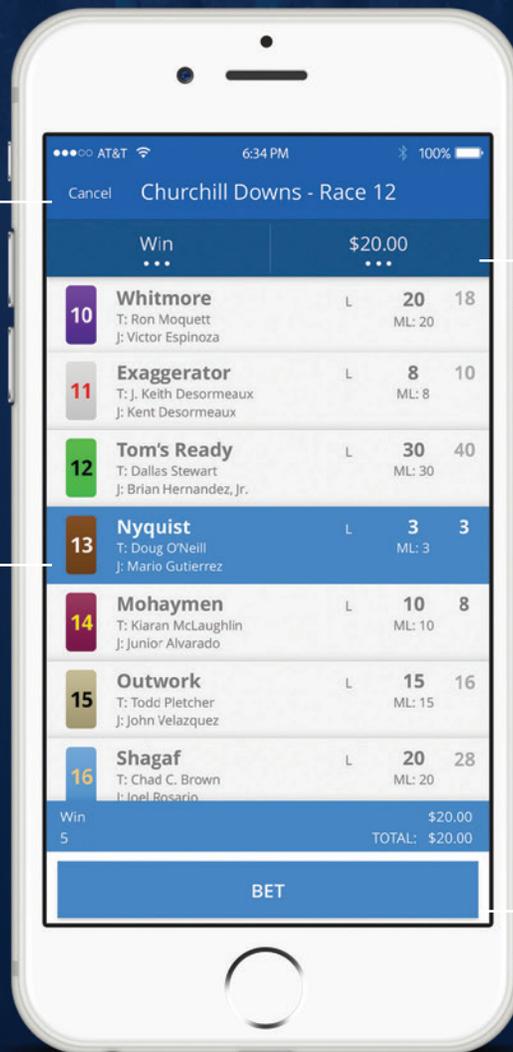
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3

4

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