

TWINSPIRES TIPSHEET



THE AMERICAN PHAROAH STAKES

The American Pharoah Stakes (Gr 1)

1 1/16-Mile

PURSE \$300,000

POST	HORSE	ML ODDS
1	American Theorem	5-1
2	Fore Left	15-1
3	Eight Rings	9-5
4	Express Train	4-1
5	Storm the Court	15-1
6	Defense Wins	15-1
7	Shoplifted	6-1
8	Nucky	10-1
9	Collusion Illusion	5-1

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TOP PICKS	
3	Eight Rings
4	Express Train
7	Shoplifted
1	American Theorem
\$20 EXACTA	
3 with 1, 4, 7	
\$10 EXACTA	
1, 4, 7 with 3	

The \$300,000 American Pharoah Stakes (G1) will be run at 1 1/16 miles for two-year-olds on the main track at Santa Anita on Friday. A field of nine is expected to compete and two of them did not complete their previous start when they lost their riders.

#1 AMERICAN THEOREM is a son of American Pharoah that looked good breaking his maiden first time out as the lukewarm favorite when he rallied from far behind to win going away. He removes blinkers and tries two turns from post one. His dam has produced three stakes winners including a grade three stakes winner at Del Mar.

#2 FORE LEFT narrowly broke his maiden first time out at Santa Anita going 4 1/2 furlongs then Doug O'Neill shipped him to Belmont Park where he won the Tremont Stakes. Two months later, he was a good third as the odds-on favorite in the Best Pal Stakes (G2) then forced the pace before weakening in the chaotic Del Mar Futurity (G1). It certainly doesn't look like his form is improving and O'Neill removes the blinkers that he experimented with last out.

#3 EIGHT RINGS looked like the next big thing when he broke his maiden by over six lengths in fast time going 5 1/2 furlongs for Bob Baffert. Being by Belmont Stakes (G1) winner Empire Maker out of a grade three stakes-winning dam, he looked like he would relish longer distance but he lost the Del Mar Futurity (G1) when he ducked in at the start and lost Drayden Van Dyke as the odds-on favorite. Now, Bob Baffert stretches him out to two turns and he brings in Johnny Velazquez to ride.

#4 EXPRESS TRAIN was a good second in his career debut behind #3 EIGHT RINGS at 10/1. He bounced back with a 14-length win going two turns as the odds-on favorite and figures to continue to prosper going long being sired by Belmont Stakes (G1) winner Union Rags out of a dam by Mineshaft that is a daughter of a Alabama Stakes (G1) winner going 1 1/4 miles.

#5 STORM THE COURT looked to be just an average debut winner at Del Mar going 5 1/2 furlongs at 12/1. He came back in the Del Mar Futurity (G1) but lost his rider after being bumped. He has worked well since then but will have to improve a lot to be competitive.

#6 DEFENSE WINS Just missed in his career debut going five furlongs and it was good enough for Doug O'Neill to try him in the Del Mar Futurity (G1) where he rallied for third in a race where two horses lost their riders. Hard to gauge his form from that but he might be able to handle two turns being sired by Flatter out of a grade two stakes-placed dam by Silver Charm who has produced two stakes winners.

#7 SHOPLIFTED broke his maiden by over four lengths in his career debut going 5 1/2 furlongs then he rallied for second after being shuffled back from post one going seven furlongs in the Hopeful Stakes (G1). I like that Steve Asmussen ships in here instead of Kentucky which might indicate he thinks this colt is good enough for the Breeders' Cup.

#8 NUCKY broke his maiden fourth time out as the 1/2 favorite against maiden \$100,000 claimers. He came back in the Del Mar Futurity (G1) and upset it at 35/1 and now tries two turns which he is impeccably bred to do. By Ghostzapper, he is out of a stakes-winning dam by Rock Hard Ten that won a grade three turf stakes race going two turns.

#9 COLLUSION ILLUSION rallied from off the pace to get up in time going five furlongs then he came back and won the six-furlong Best Pal Stakes (G2) back at Del Mar. Has had four workouts since then and he should be able to handle two turns since he cruises early and passes horses late.