



Friday

Race 6: Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf Sprint

The race features a big favorite for Europe, #12 The Platinum Queen, who beat older, mixed company last time out, but she's drawn to the far outside and has never run beyond five furlongs. The top American juvenile turf sprinter, Love Reigns, is drawn further inside. She's overcome inside posts before, but this race feels wide open. #10 Tyler's Tribe is a massive wildcard coming in from Prairie Meadows having never run on turf but having all the speed you could want in a sprinter. Ultimately, I looked at posts 4-5-6 and a trio of Europeans. #4 Dramatised ran poorly last time out, but his race two back cannot be ignored when he best 21 horses at Royal Ascot, including The Platinum Queen. #5 Mischief Magic is a Charlie Appleby runner who has racking up wins before faltering slightly against Group 1 competition last out. Appleby is winning an astonishing 55% of his Breeders' Cup entries. Meanwhile, #6 Persian Force bested Mischief Magic last out, but rarely wins and feels like a good underneath play.

Top Pick: Mischief Magic (8-1)

Top Value Selection: Persian Force (15-1)

Race 7: Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies

Some are enamored with morning line favorite #10 Chocolate Gelato; I'm fading the Todd Pletcher filly who saw her speed figures decline last time out. Instead, I like the #7 Chop Chop for trainer Brad Cox who wins at an astonishing 31% clip at the Breeders' Cup. Chop Chop ran a huge race last out at the Grade I Alcibiades, which was her first effort on the dirt. Cox just racked up another trainer title during the Fall Meet at Keeneland and it feels like all systems are go for this talented filly with a strong turn of foot. As a value play, I like a different Todd Pletcher horse, #8 Atomically, who just came to his barn from Jose Pinchin. Atomically showed a lot of ability last time out drubbing the 4/5 favorite in the My Dear Girl Stakes at Gulfstream Park. She's a latecomer to the national scene but has great early and tactical speed to ensure a good trip.

Top Pick: Chop Chop (4-1)

Top Value Selection: Atomically (12-1)

Race 8: Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf

The Juvenile Fillies Turf feels like a wide-open race as I believe the European favorite, Aidan O'Brien's #10 Meditate, may be distance compromised and has never run a turn in her life. At Keeneland she'll have to run two. Looking past her a horse like #9 Delight would the Grade I Jessamine, but the speed figures tell a different story. Ultimately, I landed on two 12-1 horses as my top two place. Shug McGaughey's #5 Pleasant Passage wired the field at the Grade II Miss Grillo and

has shown great versatility winning in two different styles and over two different turf conditions. Meanwhile, Graham Motion has a filly, #11 G Laurie, who broke her maiden in impressive fashion at Colonial Downs before running third at the G1 Natalma. She was boxed in on that day and hardly had room to run but showed a great burst and closing kick once she finally got clear. Motion is putting the blinkers on her, which should help her cross and clear several horses to her inside, so she isn't caught too wide going into the first turn.

Top Pick: Pleasant Passage (12-1)

Top Value Selection: G Laurie (12-1)

Race 9: Breeders' Cup Juvenile

In a race that is often viewed as an early preview of next year's Kentucky Derby, the Juvenile features an extremely talented pair of Bob Baffert runners in #3 Cave Rock and #10 National Treasure. Cave Rock has already cracked the 100 Beyer Speed Figure twice in three career efforts. The son of Arrogate has tremendous early speed and should be comfortable sitting first or second going into the first turn. Traveling over different ground at Keeneland will be a challenge, but it feels unlikely that a pace battle will play out and her barn mate, National Treasure, may ensure she's not pressured from behind as he'll be sitting a comfortable stalking trip. In a chalky race, look to Brad Cox's #5 Verifying to potentially hit the board at a decent price. He was impressive in debut and seemed to have the Grade I Champagne for the taking but got beat by Blazing Sevens. It was a sloppy sealed track that day and getting Verifying on a better surface should yield better results.

Top Pick: Cave Rock (4-5)

Top Value Selection: Verifying (10-1)

Race 10: Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf

I think the best American turf horse in this race is #6 Andthewinneris for trainer Wayne Catalano who has won 5 of his 14 career Breeders' Cup entries. However, I think the Europeans shipping over are simply in a different class. Charlie Appleby's #4 Silver Knott won two of his last three, both of which were Group 3 campaigns. He's seen his speed figures improve as he's stretched out and has William Buick aboard for the ride. Appleby and Buick do not run often in the United States, but when they do they win at an 88% clip when they team up with a \$5.29 ROI. Not a bad investment. I do like #1 Victoria Road on the inside race. He's a horse that has also improved each time he's stretched out in distance, including last time out at nine furlongs. He's won three straight, including a Group 3, and seems to be peaking at the right time.

Top Pick: Silver Knott (3-1)

Top Value Selection: Victoria Road (8-1)

Saturday

Race 3: Breeders' Cup Filly & Mare Sprint

This sprint is loaded with frontend speed that should feature a pretty grueling pace up front. Whereas the BC Sprint is six furlongs, the added furlongs for the fillies and mares means that going with the speed of the speed is not always a good strategy. As a result, I love both Bill Mott runners #7

Obligatory and #5 Frank's Rockette. Neither of these horses will be sucked into the early speed and they will both by running hard late. The seven furlongs should suit both well. Obligatory ran a strong third last time out at a Grade I in which she was bumped and jostled around coming for home. A cleaner trip this time around should ensure she gets to the wire first. Frank's Rockette is running in the best form of her career and has versatility to sit off the pace but maybe not leave as much work to do as Obligatory. Either way, I see Mott winning this race.

Top Pick: Obligatory (8-1)

Top Value Selection: Frank's Rockette (6-1)

Race 4: Breeders' Cup Turf Sprint

The perpetual question in turf sprints is whether you want to fade #8 Golden Pal. He's never lost in North America and he's undefeated at Keeneland. Rumors of his demise were exaggerated prior to his last effort. All he did was set a stakes record while taking down another Grade I victory. I think he's going to run a good race on Saturday, but I think that #6 Highfield Princess might be the best European he's ever run against in North America. She beat him at Royal Ascot and while she finished sixth that day she only lost to the winner by about a length. Otherwise, she's reeled off three consecutive Group 1 wins and is running better as a five-year-old than she did last year. I think she takes down the great American turf sprinter. Underneath, look to the #3 Emeraaty Ana at a big price to enrich your vertical wagers. It took him a little while to get back into form after traveling home from Meydan, but he's turned out strong performance the last two times out and will make a vertical ticket more profitable.

Top Pick: Highfield Princess (7-2)

Top Value Selection: Emeraaty Ana (20-1)

Race 5: Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile

A two-turn dirt mile that is being run at a mile and 70 yards makes this a little bit of an easier race to handicap than it might first appear. Favorite #7 Cody's Wish might be 5-5 winning at a mile, but those have all been one-turn affairs. He's lost both times he's tried running two turns. Same can be said for #5 Gunita who has been running so well this year but is more ideally suited for a seven furlong race. All of this led me to #6 Laurel River who is coming off a career effort at the Grade II Pat O'Brien. This horse hasn't had much of an opportunity to string together multiple races and is now healthy and running regularly. He's won a two-turn dirt mile twice and feels like the mile distance is perfect for him. My value play is among my favorite current racehorses, #2 Simplification. He's an honest horse who is versatile. He'll get a ground saving trip, can handle two turns, is getting a distance cutback, and probably ran his best race at a mile. He finished a head behind #9 Cyberknife last time out at the Grade I Pennsylvania Derby, yet he provides significantly better value than the Brad Cox entrant.

Top Pick: Laurel River (9-2)

Top Value Selection: Simplification (15-1)

Race 6: Breeders' Cup Filly & Mare Turf

The Filly & Mare Turf features one of my favorite trainers, John Gosden, who has a superstar in the form of #3 Nashua. A winner of two Group 1 races in Europe, she nearly won a third last time out

over the soggy ground at Longchamp. She finished second that day in a field of 21. She's handled different types of ground, conditions, and styles and will have Hollie Doyle in the irons. Her fellow Euro, #5 Tuesday, is my value play as her running lines are easily explained. After being Nashwa and the field at the Group 1 Epsom Oaks, she ran against the boys in another Group 1. She didn't measure up that day but came back to run against her own next out and finished second to Alpinista. Alpinista, of course, went on to win The Arc. Tuesday's two races since then have been over soft turf, which she clearly didn't prefer. She'll get firm turf on Saturday, and I think she's sitting on a big effort.

Top Pick: Nashwa (5-2)

Top Value Selection: Tuesday (8-1)

Race 7: Breeders' Cup Sprint

Defections and trainer decisions to move some potential entrants to the dirt mile really took the luster out of this race. Gone is Jack Christopher while Gunite, Pipeline, and Cody's Wish all opted for the Dirt Mile. As a result, we have a sprint race with nearly no early speed except for the overwhelming favorite, #9 Jackie's Warrior. If you're playing a pick sequence, this feels like an easy single as Jackie should get the perfect trip with minimal early pressure and the six furlongs is his best distance. If you're looking for value, consider using #4 American Theorem. He's an honest horse who shouldn't be too far back early and can run late. He blasted Speaker's Corner two back and ran second to Laurel River last time out. She should acquit himself well in this field.

Top Pick: Jackie's Warrior (4-5)

Top Value Selection: American Theorem (10-1)

Race 8: Breeders' Cup Mile

Fading favorite #4 Modern Games may seem crazy, but I think he is going to be flat. After demolishing the field at the Woodbine Mile, he went back to England and raced over tough ground to finish second in the British Championships on October 15. Now, three weeks later, he's back in North America at Keeneland racing against some of the best horses in the world. I do not like the turnaround time for Modern Games. Once you get past him this race really opens up. I strongly considered #3 Dreamloper who I think is going to run a big race and is a nice play if you're leaning that direction already. My top pick ended up being Annapolis who seems to have the versatility and tactical speed to make his own luck and his own trip. He's never finished out of the exacta, and he collected a Grade I win over this turf last month. From a value standpoint, #6 Ivar is going to come running late and will absolutely enrich any vertical exotic as he's nearly automatic lately at hitting the board in a big spot.

Top Pick: Annapolis (10-1)

Top Value Selection: Ivar (15-1)

Race 9: Breeders' Cup Distaff

This feels like a heavyweight title fight between some horses who have been through their share of battles. The trio of #1 Malathaat, #4 Clairiere, and #7 Search Results have been running against each other, and the best of the rest in the adult Distaff division all year. They are battle-tested and tough. Here to greet them is the super 3-year-old filly, #6 Nest. The pace should be set by #8 Society who

will be closely followed by Search Results. The faster the pace up front, the better for Malathaat and Clairiere who are both deep closers. While Nest is the favorite, I think she's susceptible since she's hardly faced stiff competition this summer. Her main adversary, #3 Secret Oath, is trending the wrong direction and outside of that the best horse she's been recently is Nostalgic. More concerning is that she's been winning easily. This will not be an easy race and I like a horse who know how to dig down and win when she's pressed. As a result, I love Clairiere. She scraped her tongue after being fractious in the gate last time out so you can toss that effort. Prior to that she had clearly come into her own and gotten the best of Malathaat. The X-factor in the field is Society who possesses incredible natural speed and if she's able to get free could wire the field. This one is going to be a classic.

Top Pick: Clairiere (4-1)

Top Value Selection: Society (6-1)

Race 10: Breeders' Cup Turf

The penultimate Grade I on the card has some big names, but their best racing might be in the past. Both #4 Broome and #11 Mishriff have world class credential and have turned in amazing efforts across the globe. However, their recent form leaves something to be desire and it's clear they are nearing the end of their racing careers. Morning line favorite, #5 Rebel's Romance, is a grinder and I think the two-turns and limited homestretch will hinder his chances. For my top pick I decided between #7 Nations Pride and #2 War Like Goddess. I ended up going with the American mare from Bill Mott's barn because I think War Like Goddess is sitting on a huge race after dispatching the boys last time out. She is coming off a career effort but did so very easily and in a way that makes you believe she can duplicate it at Keeneland. She loves the distance and if Joel Rosario keeps her out of trouble, she will unleash that turn of foot coming for home. For value, I'll look west, as in the California turf horse, #9 Gold Phoenix. Trainer Phil D'Amato is a wizard with turf horses and has been cleaning up in that division out west all year. I typically do not like west coast turf horses coming east, but 20-1 is a great price on a horse that has shown so much ability and dazzling closing speed. Look for him to coming running late and hit the board at a big price.

Top Pick: War Like Goddess (9-2)

Top Value Selection: Gold Phoenix (20-1)

Race 11: Breeders' Cup Classic

We could witness history or one of the great upsets in Classic history on Saturday. From a gambling standpoint, I always understand the desire to find value, but #4 Flightline makes is hard to bet against him. The argument against Flightline is that he's never faced a group of horses this talented, which is objective a true statement. He's also never faced the quality of early speed he will see from #2 Life Is Good. Another true statement. Amazingly, he's running on the shortest layoff of his career (64 days) for a horse that has been so carefully managed in his five career starts. Finally, adult horses making their final start in California prior to coming to Keeneland for the Breeders' Cup are 0-29. You can toss all of that out the window. It's possible Life Is Good burns up the track and wears out Flightline, but my trust in the horse has more to do with his jockey Flavien Prat. Prat is one of the best in the world and is so excellent at judging pacing and calming his horses down during the race.

In terms of the other contenders, I do not think #2 Life Is Good can get the 10-furlong distance as he often is shortening up his stride at the wire at nine furlongs. #1 Taiba may not like that inside post as

his trainer Bob Baffert has admitted the horse does not care for kickback. Now, he dealt with it okay while coming from off the pace to win the Grade I Pennsylvania Derby last out, but this is deeper water. If there is any horse that could take down Flightline, it would be #6 Epicenter who should sit a nice mid-pack trip. He should let horses like Taiba, Life Is Good, Flightline, Hot Rod Charlie, and Olympiad run themselves out up front before making a move. His Grade I Travers victory was the best race from a 3-year-old I have seen this year. Finally, I need to mention two huge prices that I think will run well. Due to the hot pace up front, expect Happy Saver (30-1) and Rich Strike (20-1) to come running late and pick up the pieces. I think both horses have a good chance to get their name on the board in a race where many are going to witness speed like they've never seen before.

At the end of the day, this is Flightline's world and we're just living in it.

Top Pick: Flightline (3-5)

Top Value Selection: Happy Saver (30-1)