



Friday

BC Juvenile Turf Sprint

I can make a case for no less than seven horses here. Will give a slight nod to the **11 (Speed Boat Beach)**, a Bob Baffert trainee out of Bayern. He's 2-for-2, winning a couple of races at Del Mar and Santa Anita by 1 ¼ each time at 5.5 and 5 furlongs. He was sent out at 2-to-5 last time in his first grass start, yet won despite hopping slightly. The **2 (Love Reigns)** is going to be tough but is likely an underlay in here for Wesley Ward, the 3-time consecutive winner of this event. If he's at his best, though, he'll be tough. It would be foolish to count out any of the European horses on a softer/yielding-type turf like they might catch in Kentucky given how much better their horses are on grass than the US-based ones are most years. The best of that bunch is the **12 (The Platinum Queen)**, who just won a Group 1 at Longchamp by speeding off and hanging on. Iowa-bred **Tyler's Tribe** is 5-for-5 (**10**) and ran the best Timeform number in this race two back in a 15 ½ length romp on the dirt at Prairie Meadows in a 6f dirt stakes. Class is question, and all of those wins were on dirt. Why the surface switch here?

BC Juvenile Fillies

There are a few races that the Keeneland Race Course can't support at this mile-and-16th distance without using the auxiliary finish line a half-furlong in front of the actual finish line. Get used to it happening a few times on the the dirt both Friday and Saturday so that races aren't forced to start on the turn. There is a lot of speed signed up here, but I think that **Wonder Wheel**, the (**5**) could be the speed of the speed. In a theme you'll see from me over these two days, I like signing up for horses who like it in central Kentucky. This Mark Casse trainee won the Alcibiades here four weeks, a Grade I at the same distance she gets on Friday. She changed leads in the stretch under Tyler Gaffalione, who will finally pop his Breeders' Cup cherry in this spot. Todd Pletcher's **Atomically** (**8**) is worth a look in all exotics if she comes anywhere near his 12/1 morning line. The Florida-bred filly drew off to win a stakes at this distance by almost 7 lengths five weeks back at Gulfstream and was moved to this barn promptly thereafter, so the ownership group likely means business. **Chocolate Gelato**, the (**10**), is likely an underlay at the morning 7-to-2 price. It's likely to turn up fast at Keeneland on Friday, so that takes some of the starch out of the Frizette win in New York at a mile in the slop last month.

BC Juvenile Fillies Turf

This race is contested at a mile, and on the Keeneland grass, there is plenty of room to run into the first turn and get good position. With that in mind, I'm inclined to look toward the **9 (Delight)**, who won her last race here four weeks ago, takem them all the way and drawing off to win by 5 in the Grade II Jessamine. The Florida-bred Thomas trainee seems to be rapidly improving and her last win was the most visually impressive of all runners here. The 5/1 price in the morning is more than fair. It's a turf

race so I've got to at least look at an Euro and the most dangerous one here looks like the **10 (Meditate)**, an Irish bred for Aiden O'Brien. Ryan Moore keeps the mount after two straight seconds, both at even-money, in Group 1s at 7 furlongs in Ireland and England. I don't expect to see the 4/1 morning line price but anything more than that might be an overlay, even in a full 14-filly field. That said, Euros are just 2-for-14 in this race, so a couple of other US-based looks might be in the form of the **13 (Xigera)**, who is a dirt-to-turf here coming back to grass after a fourth in the Alcibiades where Joe Talamo got her in plenty of trouble. Leparoux regains the mount here and her turf effort two-back at the Spa in August would put her right in the thick of things.

BC Juvenile

Cave Rock, the (3), is going to be awfully tough in here. He's got the only two Beyer 100-plus speed figs in the race and blasted **National Treasure (10)** by 5 ¼ last out in the G-I American Pharoah at Santa Anita. He's been 2-to-5 in his last couple of starts and expect something close to that again here. Value could lie in the **4 (Forte)**, who won the Breeders' Cup Futurity here over a game Loggins; no one else was within seven lengths of the top pair. If there is any speed willing to go with the favorite (Hurricane J, the 1, from the rail?) then Forte's chances certainly go up. The (6), **Blazing Sevens**, is the only other horse I give a fair chance to based on the numbers, but his last win was in the Champagne in New York in the slop.

BC Juvenile Turf

Charlie Appleby won three Breeders' Cup races in 2021, and will saddle the post-time favorite here in the finale on Friday. **Silver Knott (4)** won a Group 3 last out at Newmarket on good turf and will carry 10 pounds less in this spot at a similar price as the 4/1 he was sent off at on Oct. 8 in England. Europeans have won nine of the 15 editions of this event, and with the weather in Kentucky much more to their liking, I'm looking that way in many of the grass events on both days. **Victoria Road (1)** is the other European bred, with the aforementioned O'Brien/Moore connections. His last two wins came in France, the latter a Group 3 at even money, but he'll have to get rolling a little earlier to catch these running at just eight furlongs. The best of the American contingent is likely the **8 (I'm Very Busy)**, who got an awful trip in the Pilgrim last out Oct. 2, beaten by the **13 (Major Dude)** by a length. Chad Brown keeps Prat as the pilot and the 8 could get a 5/1 price or so in the win pool, which would not be a bad investment.

Saturday

BC F&M Sprint

Gonna try Bill Mott's Obligatory (7) here if she can catch anything close to her 8/1 morning price. She was all but out of it in the 7 furlong Ballerina at Saratoga in late August, making a mild rally for third in a race where she had no real shot to catch the top two. She also ran second on Belmont day in another 7f stakes where the track was, like in her most recent SPA race, very speed-favoring. Perhaps she can turn the tables on **Goodnight Olive (8)** if the track plays more fair in Kentucky. The **4 (Ce Ce)** is the defending champion here and she's coming off a win in the same prep she used last year to proper her to the winner's circle at 6-to-1 at Del Mar. Many of these horses seem to magically know when it's time to wake up - or their trainers do, at least. But at 4/1 in the morning,

she's gonna have to beat me given the other options in here. The wild card is the **13 (Echo Zulu)**, who I bet in the Kentucky Oaks, where she was a disappointing fourth after not getting a great trip. Steve Asmussen put her on the bench for 141 days, and she promptly smoked four others by 5 ¼ in Churchill's Grade III Dogwood on Sept. 24.

BC Turf Sprint

The sprint races are always a dart throw for me, and despite some of the success from favorites in many of them over the last few years in Breeders' Cup races, I usually try to beat them. Unfortunately, the horses I like with a little longer prices here all have question marks. One of those is the **(11), Casa Creed**, a 6-year old who has won two Grade I's this year on New York grass despite getting sent over the Middle East for losses in Saudi Arabia and the UAE a month apart. Those were the horse's first two races after a BC Mile where he ran eighth by 3 ½. He has yet to shorten up to this 5 ½ furlong distance, with the two last three Grade I's coming at 6f, 8f and 8f. The last effort, a fifth by two lengths to Annapolis here four weeks ago, likely gives some trepidation to those who'll consider backing him. But at this price, he's likely the best value if he can get a good trip from Saez, his rider for all five trips in 2022. Brad Cox's **Caravel (10)** merits a look in the win pool at anything close to his 20/1 morning price. He came up empty in this race with Graham Motion as the conditioner last year, finishing 12th by 9 ½ lengths at Del Mar after having nothing once the real running began after the turn. It's been feast-or-famine for 5-year Pennsylvania bred, with four wins (none graded) and a sixth, ninth and fourth in seven starts for the 2-time Eclipse Award winning trainer. Favorite **Golden Pal (8)** will draw a lot of singles in the multi-race exotics, given he is a perfect 4-for-4 over the Keeneland turf. He wired them last out in the Woodford at 5 ½ furlongs. Ward is just 1-for-13 in this event, and for a Euro angle on the grass, get a close look at **Highfield Princess (6)**. The French mare will try the boys with regular pilot Jason Hart getting saddled by John Quinn. Neither part of the connections have a record at Keeneland, but that might be helping the price here. The mare has enough talent that it would surprise no one if she won here, given she's won her last three Group 1's by ¾, 2½ and 3¼ lengths, respectively, with the last one being at even-money on soft turf at 5 furlongs at Curragh in Ireland. There's a chance the ground could have some give to it, which would likely make her more dangerous.

BC Dirt Mile

It would be difficult to argue with anyone who says that the **5 (Gunite)** or the **7 (Cody's Wish)** were likely the best horses in this race. Call it my Cox bias due to my friendship with many of the connections around that barn, but if I can anything close to the 9-to-2 in the morning on **Cyberknife (9)** then I'm compelled to look in that direction. The temperamental 3-year old has come up big several times this year, with wins in Hot Springs, Louisville, Oceanport and a big effort at the Spa (second to Epicenter's monster effort in the Travers). He also won a G3 by a nose after a disappointing 18th in the Kentucky Derby, and he's shortening to a mile for the first time since before he broke his maiden late last year. Expect Florent Geroux to have him in position to win this race from the jump, even if he's not the chief speed. Like many other BC races, a bomb could get there if you trust some of the speed figures of longer shots to put them in the mix. Color me intrigued by the **4 (Law Professor)**, trained by Rob Atras and ridden by Jose Ortiz. He was sent to this barn after a dull 9th in a Grade 3 in Arkansas back in April, given five full months off and then winning a turf stakes at Kentucky Downs at 9-to-1. His last effort was a strong second in the Woodward in the New York slop and now he's coming

into this race with five weeks off. The 4-year old gelding has every chance to surprise here.

BC F&M Turf

The pick-6 starts here, and if you had one race (money not being an object) to hit the "ALL" button, this would probably be the suggestion. The good news is that you can likely draw a line through most - if not all - of the American-based girls in here. I'm gonna try to play "catch me if you can" with the **11 (In Italian)**, a British-bred filly who won the Grade I First Lady on this course four weeks back by a length. Chad Brown keeps Joel Rosario as the jock, and she has also won at 9 furlongs in the Grade I Diana at Saratoga, going off 8-to-1 there. I'm curious to see how the speed holds up on the grass; her chances go way up if there is any bias. It would be foolish to dump either the **10 (Virginia Joy)** or the **9 (Rougir)** - the German and French bred girls that Chad Brown has been training all year (Rougir) and since 2021 (Virginia Joy). Irad Ortiz has the call on Virginia Joy and probably has the best of all mounts this weekend; he's lined up to ride in all 14 Breeders' Cup races. Whatever your opinion of him, that doesn't happen by accident.

The **4 (Above the Curve)** has run six times over wet grass in Europe - each of her starts has been off! And there's a good chance she'll get it again Saturday. Does she count as a foreigner if she's Kentucky-bred and will have John R. Velasquez on her back despite running exclusively in Europe and owning multiple wins in Ireland and a Group 1 win in France this year? If the rain stays away, take a look at the **5 (Tuesday)** who was beaten twice recently on soft French grass. The O'Brien/Moore connection is hard to ignore in any grass race, especially at 8/1 or better, which is what her price was in the morning. The **3 (Nashwa)** is a logical threat, though I'm hardly interested in her price and it would feel like a loss if you go deep in the horizontal exotics here and she wins.

BC Sprint

Is it possible for me to call this my favorite race of the whole weekend when I rarely if ever win it? Nonetheless, let's see what pops here. I've gotten the "fading Jackie's Warrior" part right the last couple of years, as he's been a beaten favorite in this race and I think he (9) is again here, given the outlandish 4-to-5 price that they put on him in the morning. Kentucky bettors don't stand for the "ain't no man alive who can pay a rent betting four-to-fives" horses so I expect closer to 7/5 ish by post, even with only 11 horses in the race. If there value on the one girl in here, I'd sure like to try her (**2, Kimari**). But I'm not sure you will get it. She was just 4/1 in the morning and she was seventh in the BC Turf Sprint last year and hasn't won a Grade I since a 7f race on this course a full 19 months ago. How about the **5, Aloha West**? Luis Saez will ride this horse for the first time for Wayne Catalano and the 12/1 morning price would be more than fair. The 5-year old out of Hard Spun won his last start at Churchill back in early July despite a troubled trip. He's going to have to improve some but given his losses in the other two races this year were to *Flightline* and **Jackie's Warrior (9)**, there's no shame there.

BC Mile

This is one of my strongest opinions of the weekend, and that includes one with North Carolina -7 at

Virginia (noon Saturday EDT, ACC Network, thank me later). Why? Because **Kinross (13)** is grossly mispriced and we can only hope to catch something close to his 9-to-2 on Saturday. First, I finally get to root for Frankie Dettori, one of my favorite jockeys of all time. He gets a British-bred 5-year old gelding that has won four straight, all Group 2 or better, since late August, in England and France. The six furlong win on yielding turf at Ascot could turn into a great prep for this spot, and he beat 17 others in that one, so the full field won't intimidate. The post is not ideal, but in Frankie We Trust. Just don't jump off the sumbitch before you cross the wire! Just seeing **Modern Games (4)** in the program again gives me a headache after the biggest lock (yes, I said it and I rarely use that word unless it involves doors) of the weekend got scratched out because racing authorities in California last November were idiots. But the Irish colt with the same strong connections (Appleby/Buick) won his only start on this side of the pond in a G-I by 5-plus at Woodbine in September. If he wins, it can't surprise anyone. **Ivar (6)**, the 6-year Brazilian bred, also interests me. He lost by 1 ½ to **Annapolis (11)** last out here in a Grade I four weeks back but didn't get a great trip. He also lost to Modern Games two back when he got bumped at the start and had to come 8-wide to get second in the Woodbine Mile. Lobo has dumped Joe Talamo in favor of Javier Castellano, which should be an upgrade. I give the **9 (Malavath)** a puncher's chance, too. Gaffalione gets the call for the European connections and Irish bred, who was just two back of my projected winner Kinross last out on soft ground in France in a 7f Group 1. Not impossible to think he can catch that one and others going 8 furlongs.

BC Distaff

Don't get the 9 in the last race confused with the **1 (Malathaath)** in this one... but both have a shot! Let's see how the 4-year old handles seeing the **4 (Clariere)** again given that the Curlin filly beat the 1 twice this year in NY stakes races. Malathaath rebounded to win the Personal Ensign and the Spinster, both Grade I's, in August and early October at the Spa and Keeneland, respectively. The numbers in those two races would be enough to put her in contention here. I'd be foolish to not mention the other contenders, of which there are at least four if not five more who can win this race. The **6 (Nest)**, the **7 (Search Results)** and the **8 (Society)** all rate fair shots. The 8 will be the speed and she will try to take them 9 furlongs for Flo and Asmussen, but that has only happened once in this race the last 17 years. It's a tough ask, even at this price and on this Kentucky dirt. Nest won the G-II Beldame last out, facing older girls for the first time; she has beaten the girls three straight since her last loss in the 12-furlong Belmont Stakes to Mo Donegal. She lost to the **3 (Secret Oath)** in the 2022 Kentucky Oaks, but that Lukas filly hasn't won since, going 0-for-4 in Grade I's in Maryland, New York and Pennsylvania before getting six weeks to rest before this one. Don't be surprised...

BC Turf

If the Europeans haven't done well to this point, don't count them out. This 12 furlong affair is right up their alley, as they've captured 61 percent of all BC Turf editions, and they have prominent horses to raise that percentage to 62 on Saturday afternoon in Fayette County. Irish-bred **Mishriff (11)** is the most prominent of the contenders from across the pond. The John Gosden/Frankie Dettori connections promise to make this a fun race, even though he's a new pilot for the 5-year old that is winless in seven starts dating to August of last year. All were in Group 1's, however, so he's faced the best of the best. Two other Euros are worth a hard look, including **(5) Rebel's Romance** and **(7) Nations Pride**. Each are Irish-breds that are morning-line priced at 7-to-2 or shorter, so you're not stealing. But it will be tough to beat these guys if either are near their best. The 5 ran twice on dirt in

the UAE and didn't get a sniff before Appleby threw him back on the grass in England twice and Germany twice (all stakes races; the Godolphin gelding has won all of them and is 8-0-0 in 11 starts, for whatever that is worth). Appleby retains the services of Buick for his 7; that colt won the Saratoga Derby with Buick before prevailing in a G-III turf stakes in New York City Sept. 17 at 12 furlongs at 2-to-5 with Dettori on. Of the Americans, I give the **2 (War Like Goddess)** the best shot. The 5-year old out of English Channel (KY bred) gets Rosario back for Bill Mott and she has closed at 4-to-5 or lower in all of her last seven starts except for the 2/1 price that was there when she popped out of the gate at Del Mar in the Filly & Mare Turf exactly a year ago. She ran third in that race, and was second in a G-II on the Saratoga grass this summer. Outside of that, she's got seven wins from seven starts going back to March of 2021. Her numbers suggest she should be good enough here if at her best.

BC Classic

Flightline. The 4. That's all I've got. If the track comes up wet, then I don't know. If it doesn't, he should be 1-to-5 or 1-to-10. He names the score if he wants to. Underneath, for vertical exotics, you can maybe try **(6) Epicenter** and **(1) Taiba**. I could see **(2) Life Is Good** getting a piece as well. I think this could be a coronation and we should all sit back and enjoy it unless you're actually trying to beat this monster. I wouldn't recommend it...