

Fort Erie Selections: Sunday August 12th, 2018

*Today's eight race card features two grass races, one of which is the ultra-competitive nightcap.
Good luck to all the horses, their connections, and those joining us! -Ashley Mailloux*

Race 1: #1 Devilish Style has really shined in her races at Fort Erie and looks to get back into the winner's circle after finishing second last time out. She was sitting in second throughout but wasn't able to get the lead and was beat by Madcap Duchess, who is a strong runner here at FE. This mare was beyond impressive in her 2018 FE debut, winning by over five lengths. She seems ready to rebound and has a bullet work on August 12th, breezing three furlongs in :36 flat. **#2 Wild N Clever** was game to the end in her most recent start and recorded her first win of 2018. She seems to have enough early speed so the transition to the main shouldn't hurt her chances, but since she only has one race over the dirt and no recorded works, I'll try to beat her in here with a proven dirt mare. **#5 About a Girl** has added to her record over this course this season, hitting the board in each of her three dirt races this season. She's been running against other runners in here and she exits the same race as Devilish Style, who only beat her by one length. Her trainer Josh Robillard has been strong this meet, winning at a 25% clip from 28 starts.

Race 2: #5 Italian Ice will find herself back on the main after a strong race over the grass on July 1st. This filly consistently finds herself on the lead and has been successful this meet, never finishing worse than second regardless of the surface. She seems as though she will appreciate the drop in class but will have a few other front runners to worry about. **#2 A Bit of Who Do** has been strong over the dirt but has yet to win. He most recently finished second against this level on July 24th over a sloppy track and it appears he found himself leg weary in the lane. His biggest issue seems to be stamina, but he will cutback to the five furlong distance which could help. After breaking his maiden in a \$25k maiden claimer at WO as a two year old, **#6 Arrius** has yet to hit the board so his connections look to turn things around here on a new surface. He has been facing better at Woodbine this year and has shown he can handle the dirt in the mornings, so he does appear to be a logical contender in this spot.

Race 3: #1 Sweet Deal found herself in trouble early on in her most recent appearance and was never able to recover. She was very impressive here in her FE debut and was training well going into her last race, so it does seem that this filly should bounce back. Also, the major class relief that she receives in here is enough to make her my top selection. Morning line favorite **#3 Matching Vows** has yet to hit the board in 4 starts this year but looks to get back on track while dropping to her lowest level and trying a new surface. She exits a disappointing fifth place finish a week ago over the grass, where she found the optional claiming company to be a bit too tough. She was strong last year, winning against maiden special weight company and then coming back two races later to win an optional claiming event (\$40k) at Woodbine. On the class drop alone she's a major contender, but the dirt will be a huge factor. The least experienced runner of the group, **#4 Sentimental Lady** has been competitive in four of her five races and only missed the board when trying the turf against males. She was second to Holdonweregoinhome, who has been extremely strong over the main track and does have a win this season. She's perfect at the six furlong distance and is certainly worth consideration in this spot.

Race 4: #4 D. Shifflett has raced on the turf in both of his FE starts this season and has yet to hit the board. In his defense, he's faced tough horses such as Remembering Mickey, World of Prospects, and Rhythm Blues. He'll be facing lesser company in this spot and finds himself back on the dirt, a surface that he seems to appreciate as he has a 2-5-4 record from 22 starts. He does have two wins this season, one of which was over the dirt at Tampa. He's been training over the dirt all season and appears to be extremely capable of bouncing back. The closer, **#2 Shot for Shot** has come up short in his last three, finishing second each time. He's needed extra ground to run at and today he will get that, so he may be more of a factor in the late stages of this race. He will be stepping up, but he has faced Gasparilla Trove, who looks to be one of the better claiming horses this year. **#1 Been Waiting** was second last Sunday to Gasparilla Trove at this same level. He's found the sprint distances to be more to his liking and is a player against this group.

Race 5: It was not the plan for **#4 Splash With Me** to make his dirt debut last time out, but he proved that he can adapt to any surface and in the end, he found himself in the winner's circle. He has picked up two runner up placings this season from four starts and will make his first turf start for trainer Anthony Adamo, who looks to add to his strong numbers this season. He's the class of the field and looks to be the one to beat. While he's stepping up big time, **#6 Case in Point** has had two strong back to back races over this course since teaming up with jockey Brad Wilson and should be a part of the pace scenario. He seems to prefer this distance, as he most recently found the mile and one sixteenth distance to be a bit too much for him. He was competitive in a \$12k claiming event last season here and he finds himself in an allowance event that has come up softer than others this season. **#2 Rebel Music** had an unfortunate start last time out and after that, he was never in contention. Prior to that start, he was strong in his 2018 debut, finishing second at Woodbine in a claiming event (\$19k tag). He'll be making his debut for his new trainer and looks to fit this level well. The biggest concern for this runner is the fact that he hasn't won since 2016.

Race 6: **#1 Street Tail** picked up his first win this year in his most recent start on Prince of Wales day. He found himself on the lead and never looked backed, as he ended up opening up on the field to win by five lengths. He's faced some strong horses at these levels this season, such as Executive Five and Hombre Natural and finds himself in a spot where he is very capable of the repeat. His trainer, Kevin Buttigieg does extremely well with horses doubling up, as he wins at 32% from 22 starters. **#5 Tobruk** finished a nice second in his dirt debut two starts ago but was unable to catch Grin n' Bear who ran quite nicely last week when stepping up in class. After failing to fire on July 25th at Woodbine, his connections have opted to run him back here and he has a shot. **#2 Flashy Margaritta** has only missed the board once from 10 starts at FE over the main and has yet to miss the board this season here. With this is in mind, do note he's gone off as the favorite time 5 times this season and looks to be a lock in the exotics but not on the top spot.

Race 7: **#2 Ave Caesar** has been improving with each start this season and comes into this race off a huge second place finish while facing better. He was game to the very end and found himself on the losing end of a tight photo finish. He's been against tough company each start this season and now finds himself in a lower level where he could very well impress. He'll retain the services of jockey Kirk Johnson, who has guided this five year old son of Kodiak Kowboy to the winner's circle twice. In his most recent race, **#4 Tiger Hall** failed to fire which was slightly unusual for this consistent runner who adores the main track here at Fort Erie (6-4-4 from 19 starts). He'll be making his third start of the year and he may have had some excuses last time out so watch out for him in this spot. The barn does well with this length of a layoff, winning at 23% from 13 starts. An alluring runner that may offer some value is **#7 Vilma**, who comes into this race fresh off a win over the tapeta at Woodbine. This gelding was racing predominately in NY last year and for the early part of 2018 while in the barn of Linda Rice. Prior to his last start, his previous win was on May of 2017, where he went gate to wire against very strong claiming company at Belmont Park.

Race 8: **#4 Rhythm Blues** was impressive off a year layoff, winning a claiming event for non-winners of three lifetime by over three lengths at a slightly longer distance over the grass. He came back to finish third and his connections have chosen this spot against slightly lesser. He'll be extremely tough in here and looks to be versatile enough to run from any spot he finds himself in. He did beat **#5 Canadian Class**, who looks to be competitive and picked up a win last time out. Two of his three lifetime wins have been over this track and it's worth noting that he did win while in for \$12.5k last season. It's interesting to see that Melanie Pinto, who guided him to his most recent victory has opted for elsewhere and looks to have had several options to choose from. She ended up choosing **#3 I Am Who I Am**, who she hopped off of last time. This gelding didn't really fire last time out but could return to form while dropping down in class. He's one of four runners in here to have won in 2018 and was impressive when he won two starts ago at this distance.