

Fort Erie Selections: Monday, July 8th, 2024

Our second day of racing for the week features eight races, with a first post of 4:30 PM. Good luck to today's connections and those wagering on the races!

- Ashley Mailloux

Race 1: **#2 Visitor's Welcome** will make his first start for trainer Julie Mathes, after finishing off the board in four starts as a two-year-old. This son of Souper Speedy should handle the dirt just fine, as many offspring of Souper Speedy do and he has shown early foot in three of his starts so far, which should play well to the surface. This will be the lowest tag he's raced for in his career. In his two races this season, **#1 Fajardo** has been the runner up. On opening day, he was no match for Busta Groove, who looked like the horse to beat on paper and last time out, he was well beaten again as the favorite. With that said, he might have hooked a group today that he's good enough to beat. **#4 Drillhall** was just a length behind Fajardo on opening day, but in his last out effort, he found the maiden special weight level to be too tough. With that said, it wasn't the toughest event that we've seen so far, but the pace fell completely apart in that race and the winner circled the field. He figures to be better suited for this level and retains Sofia Vives in the irons.

Race 2: Trainer Danny Wills sends out **#2 So Breanna**, who has tried the dirt twice in her career and performed well in both starts. She scored here on October 3rd and followed that effort up with a game second place finish. This is the perfect spot for her to kick off her five-year-old season and the barn does well with their runners, with a win already at the meet. She has the ability to be forward but can also sit from off the pace and rally. **#4 This One Can Run** was third in her first start of the meet and maybe was at a disadvantage, chasing the speed of Nice Baby, who drew clear by four and a quarter lengths and who has since come back to win a starter optional claiming event with a 65 Beyer. The runner up of that event, Mimi's Holiday, won the nightcap yesterday. With that said, this is arguably a softer spot than that race on June 4th was. **#6 Chrome's Big Break** has won two of her three starts here and last time out, she was unable to make the lead like she did in her other starts. She didn't break the best and came up empty. With that said, she gets a new rider today and the benefit of the outside draw while also dropping in claim price today.

Race 3: **#2 Classy Boy** finished second in his two local performances, both of which have been this season. In his first start at the meet, he was second best behind Grand Ambition, who came back to win next time out while jumping up significantly in class and last time out, he got a similar trip from Leo Salles and was beaten a length by Street Serenade, who picked up his second win in a row. Nothing changes for him today except for a rider switch and based on what we've seen so far, he figures to be a major player at this level. **#3 Artie's All In** took a step forward last time out while dropping to this level and wasn't far behind Classy Boy on June 24th. Ismael Mosquera sticks with him again and he was able to get this gelding rolling late last time out. He was off a tad slow in that most recent outing and with a better break, he can be more effective. **#1 Harper City** will try the dirt for the first time after facing winners for the first-time last time out at Woodbine. Prior to that dull effort, she was able to sit off a slow pace and rally to win by a neck under Amanda Vandermeersch. Two of her three starts this year have been quite good and last time out, it was maybe a tad tough for her in terms of class, as well as the fact that she was facing winners for the first time. With that said, the dirt is a bit of an unknown for her, but she's trained over the training track at Woodbine and has had some decent drills and she could be closing late from a stalking trip.

Race 4: **#3 Hiatus** won his first start of 2024 in gate to wire fashion and following that effort, he found himself in a tough starter optional claiming event where he finished third after setting the pace. He finds himself at this level again, but overall, this group is a tad softer than the bunch he faced on June 25th. He looks to be the likely pace setter, with a few of his rivals not too far off him early. **#5 Jack the Cat** hasn't been seen since October 12th at Woodbine, where he rallied from last to finish third, beaten by two and a half lengths. He raced well the entire fall between here and Woodbine and finished second at the level. With that said, he'll need some pace help, as he's typically a one run sort of closer and he may need a race, but based on his resume last year, he's worth a long look here. **#6 Master Spy** failed to fire in his first start for his new connections and went off as the post time favorite. He sticks at this level and maybe had an excuse last time out. The barn has been winning at a high percentage and their claims have done quite well – toss at your own risk, even with the dull effort on June 25th.

Race 5: **#6 It's Game Knight** finished second in his dirt debut on June 24th in a race that ended up being a “merry-go round” race – the pace setter drew clear, It's a Game Knight tracked in second throughout and so did the third place finisher. It was his first start since August of 2023 and he likely needed a race, so all things considered, he ran well and figures to be sharper. **#2 Brady O'Brady** finished second in his second start of the year, beaten by just two and a quarter lengths. He's a consistent, salty veteran who often finds himself closing late to pick up a piece and is a must use underneath in the exotics. **#1 Cant Glide By Katz** last race in late May at Mountaineer and now will return to the Fort for the first time since August. In his last few efforts, he's been a bit closer to the pace and that sort of trip might work nicely for him here with the inside draw.

Race 6: **#2 Haddasah's Devil** returns to the six-and-a-half-furlong distance after finishing a distant third last time out going around two turns. Two starts back, he beat several of his foes at the distance and did so quite nicely, drawing clear by a length and a half. He has versatility, but he seems most comfortable rating off the pace and making one move and figures to appreciate the cutback today. **#3 Private Network** has tried two turns in his only starts at the Fort and unfortunately, he's shown sprint speed early and has tired late in those races. His first start at the Fort, he ran a strong second behind Private Lake. The six-and-a-half-furlong distance should suit him quite well and he may try to steal this on the front. **#5 Hicksy** picked up his sixth career victory on opening day and most recently, he tried starter optional claiming on the turf course, but failed to hold in the stretch. He drops back down in class, returns to the dirt, and gets a weight break with Alexis Sanchez in the irons.

Race 7: **#8 Calm Cool** has been involved in the pace in her last two starts but has tired in both. Her most recent race was the better of those two, as she finished sixth, but was only beaten by three and a quarter lengths. She drops in class and cuts back in distance, both of which should result in an improved performance. **#3 Goingtoaruba** finished fourth last time out after setting the pace against maiden special weight competition on the dirt. It was her best performance in terms of placing and Beyer speed figure, but her connections have decided to drop her in for the lowest tag of her career while also racing her on the turf for the first time. The change of surface and level may help her take a step forward and she at least took a step in the right direction last time out. **#7 Ashcar Nellie** didn't show a whole lot in her debut, but she takes a slight drop and switches to the turf, which from a pedigree perspective, may be the right move. Her half-sister, Fair Point, was a G3 winner on the turf and amassed \$491k in earnings during her twenty-one race career, where most of her success came in turf sprints.

Race 8: While **#9 Private Lake** jumps up in claiming price today, the ten-time winner was able to win quite nicely at the distance on June 11th – he sat a few lengths off the pace with a mid-pack trip and closed in deep stretch to win. On paper, it looks as though he might be able to carve out a similar trip and will have a jump on many of the deep closing types in this field. The barn continues to roll, as they picked up another winner yesterday. **#4 Redoute's Light** is one of those deep closers – last time out, he rallied from the back of the pack to finish third in that event Private Lake won. With that said, his running style typically leaves him with too much work to do late, but he shows up just about every single time he runs at the Fort and he'll be making his third start off the layoff. **#1 Diamondback** has the inside draw which figures to work well with his front-end running style. Last year, his lone win came in a race where he took the field gate to wire and when he makes an easy lead, he's dangerous. He may not make the lead easily here, but he should take a step forward second off the layoff and while stretching out, which suggests he's worth a look in terms of the exotics at what figures to be a big price.