

2026 Horse Racing Weekend Preview

151st Preakness

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Laurel Park | Saturday May 16th, 2026 | Race 13 | 1 3/16 Miles | Dirt | \$2,000,000 | Three Year Olds | G1



1 - Taj Mahal
Federico Tesio Winner
Sheldon Russell | Brittany Russell
5/1



2 - Ocelli
Kentucky Derby Third
Tyler Gaffalione | D. Whitworth Beckman
6/1



3 - Crupper
Bath House Row Winner
Junior Alvarado | Donnie Von Hemel
30/1



4 - Robusta
San Felipe Runner-Up
Rafael Bejarano | Doug O'Neill
30/1



5 - Talkin
Blue Grass Third
Irad Ortiz Jr. | Danny Gargan
20/1



6 - Chip Honcho
Risen Star Runner-Up
Jose Ortiz | Steven Asmussen
5/1



7 - The Hell We Did
Lexington Runner-Up
Luis Saez | Todd Fincher
15/1

8 - Bull By The Horns
Rushaway Winner
Micah Husbands | Saffie Joseph Jr.
30/1



9 - Iron Honor
Gotham Winner
Flavien Prat | Chad Brown
9/2



10 - Napoleon Solo
Champagne Winner
Paco Lopez | Chad Summers
8/1



11 - Corona De Oro
Lexington Third
John Velazquez | Dallas Stewart
30/1



12 - Incredibolt
Virginia Derby Winner
Jaime Torres | Riley Mott
5/1



13 - Great White
John Battaglia Winner
Alex Achard | John Ennis
15/1



14 - Pretty Boy Miah
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Ricardo Santana Jr. | Jeremiah Englehart
15/1



Preakness 2026 Contender Profiles



1 - Taj Mahal Federico Tesio Winner

Trainer: Brittany Russell
Jockey: Sheldon Russell
Sire: Nyquist
Dam: Oola Gal

Past Performances:

Record: 3 | 3-0-0 \$178,200

Key Races:

Feb06 MSW (Lrl | 6f)
Won Impressively
Off Slow and Green
Miracle Wood (Lrl | 8f)
Won on Lead in the Mud
Off 15 Days Rest
Gutsy Win with Lot of Heart
Federico Tesio (Lrl | 9f)
Won in Dominant Fashion
Cleared, Opened, Breathed, Opened

Running Style:

Free-Running Speed
High Natural Cruising Speed

Strengths:

- Home-Field Advantage - Undefeated at Laurel Park
- Bred for Distance but With a Lot of Speed
- Strong Carrying Speed at the Front End
- Perfect Form Cycle

Weaknesses:

- Class Step-Up
- No Longer Lone Speed

Taj Mahal is a dangerous horse in the Preakness that is looking to make history by being the first horse since Deputed Testamony (1983) to sweep the Tesio and the Preakness. Winning the local prep helps, and in the fashion he did, he is on everyone's radar. While he seems to be a front running type, his maiden breaking score was in a more stalking trip - so perhaps he has versatility. If Sheldon Russell can guide him to a clear path and control the pace to be steady, this horse who has been lights out in the morning and is on a great form cycle could be the one coming away with the win on Saturday - a very impressive horse looking to win one for Maryland!



2 - Ocelli Kentucky Derby Third

Trainer: Whitworth Beckman
Jockey: Tyler Gaffalione
Sire: Connect
Dam: Zalia

Past Performances:

Record: 7 | 0-1-4 \$609,800

Key Races:

Wood Memorial (Aqu | 9f | G2)
3rd with Sustained Rally
Improved with Blinkers Off
Kentucky Derby (CD | 10f | G1)
3rd after Being Caught
Bumped Around a Lot Early
Winding but Strong Closing Stretch
Huge Run from Back
Impressive Speed Figure

Running Style:

Deep Closer
Sweeping Move with Fast Pace

Strengths:

- Bred to Run All Day
- Continues to Improve Since Blinkers Came Off
- Improved on Speed Figures
- Long Late Strides

Weaknesses:

- Still a Maiden
- Pace Dependent

Ocelli is the only in the money finisher of the Kentucky Derby that is wheeling back in two weeks, looking to improve on his 3rd place effort at Churchill Downs. His Derby performance may not have been a fluke - it was very possible a culmination of a training effort to get him to focus more and be able to run strong now that the blinkers came off - a huge boost to his mental game. In a wide-open field without a lot of class, he may be the play for many if he comes back in good order off his tremendous Derby finish. However, he will need to buck over a century of history - no maiden has won the Preakness since 1888 with Refund. If the pace is hot, he will be running strong late.



3 - Crupper Bath House Row Winner

Trainer: Donnie Von Hemel
Jockey: Junior Alvarado
Sire: Candy Ride
Dam: She's All In

Past Performances:

Record: 6 | 2-0-3 \$210,665

Key Races:

Feb06 MSW (OP | 8.5f)
Won to Break Maiden
Sharp Stalking Trip
Feb28 AOC (OP | 8.5f)
3rd After a Poor Trip
Bath House Row (OP | 9f)
Won Wire to Wire
Refused to Lose
Low Beyer in Win

Running Style:

Tactical Pacesetter/Grinder
Sustained, Forward Speed

Strengths:

- Elite Stamina Pedigree
- Patient, Developing Training Approach
- Fresh Speed
- Strong Workouts

Weaknesses:

- Low Speed Figures
- Slow Fractions in Wins
- Unimpressive Thus Far

Crupper comes in from the Win & You're In race at Oaklawn, the Bath House Row. A two-time winner, he is an honest and professional horse that likes to win on the front end. His two wins came with him within a length of the lead early and getting it down the backstretch at the latest, while any race where he was shuffled back or had pace pressure, he did not find his way to the front. This race is certain to have a ton of pace pressure - he is very unlikely to get the run he wants and going to be tough for him to find his way to the winners circle. But he has the stamina and late going tacts to potentially find himself in line for a piece of the pie if he can hang on for the exotics.

Preakness 2026 Contender Profiles



4 - Robusta San Felipe Runner-Up

Trainer: Doug O'Neill
Jockey: Rafael Bejarano
Sire: Accelerate
Dam: Urbane Legend

Past Performances:

Record: 6 | 1-1-0 \$83,500

Key Races:

San Felipe (SA | 8.5f | G2)
2nd to Potente
Showed Speed & Made Serious Bid
Santa Anita Derby (SA | 9f | G1)
7th and Well Beaten
Folded Near the Stretch
Bobbled Start
Kentucky Derby (CD | 10f | G1)
14th and Never a Factor
Troubled Start & Adversity

Running Style:

Tactical Speed
High Cruiser That Can Stalk

Strengths:

- Explosive Gate Speed
- Potential for Strong Finish
- Can Win in a Duel
- Mental Toughness
- Durable & Battle Hardened

Weaknesses:

- Red Flags in Last Start
- Seemed to be Regressing
- Bobbled Starts if Unable to Get Clear
- Uninspiring Morning Works
- Stamina Concerns

Robusta is a very heavy longshot here, even after coming out of the Kentucky Derby. His run last race was a complete toss with all chance abandoned early - too much trouble for him to get going whatsoever. He is very much a one-run horse, and he had no chance to make that with his troubled trip. While he has trained well earlier in the year, his recent works and recent races have not inspired much confidence, losing by 16 and 17.5 lengths his last two outs. A win would be shocking at this point - a complete form reversal. Perhaps if things fall apart, Robusta could be making a late run, but he hasn't put together a solid race since early March and even that, that was an outlier.



5 - Talkin Blue Grass Third

Trainer: Danny Gargan
Jockey: Irad Ortiz Jr.
Sire: Good Magic
Dam: Rote

Past Performances:

Record: 5 | 1-1-1 \$288,625

Key Races:

Aug30 MSW (Sar | 7f)
Won over Further Ado
Champagne (Aqu | 8f | G1)
2nd Behind Napoleon Solo
Showed Strong Late Rally
Blue Grass (Kee | 9f | G1)
3rd Well Beaten Behind Further Ado
Not Speed of Winner
Better Than Flat TB Derby Effort
Gained Ground Late, Not Enough

Running Style:

Stalker
Steady Runner Throughout

Strengths:

- Fresh Horse
- Gains Irad Ortiz Jr.
- Strong & Steady Strider

Weaknesses:

- Hasn't Shown Anything Since 2yo
- Uninspiring Workouts
- Finishes are Less Than Stellar
- Speed Figure Gap

Talkin has done nothing yet to garner any attention or recommendation - but has been in a lot of races with top horses like Further Ado, The Puma, Paladin, and Renegade. Perhaps his back class will be able to get him across the wire early - but otherwise it is very hard to find an angle on him... other than Irad getting aboard. He can't be a toss because of who is riding him, but a win is a tall order against this field. He is the type of horse that you should use in the exotics at the bottom of tris and supers as Irad should be able to give him a solid ride and get the most out of him, and his class shows he has some talent - but it would be a form reversal for him to win.



6 - Chip Honcho Risen Star Second

Trainer: Steven Asmussen
Jockey: Jose Ortiz
Sire: Connect
Dam: Miss My Rose

Past Performances:

Record: 6 | 2-2-0 \$280,475

Key Races:

Gun Runner (FG | 8.5f | L)
Won by Pressing the Pace
Risen Star (FG | 9f | G2)
2nd, Ahead of Golden Tempo
Set Contested Pace and Gave Way
Solid Effort in Tough Field
Louisiana Derby (FG | 9.5f | G2)
5th and Well Beaten
Distance May Have Been Too Much
Crowd Was Too Big

Running Style:

Pacesetter
Wants to be on the Top of the Pace

Strengths:

- Solid Speed when Breaking Well
- Good Backclass and Form
- Consistent Runner
- Training Well
- Aimed for This Race

Weaknesses:

- Distance Issues
- Doesn't Do Well Off the Lead
- Might Not be Fast Enough

Chip Honcho exits the Louisiana races that gave us Kentucky Derby winner Golden Tempo and looks to try to bolster up the races from the Fair Grounds even more. His Gun Runner win was visually impressive, pressing and just getting up in time to capture his first stakes win. But challenges happened in the Lecomte and the Louisiana Derby where he got off slow and never could get to where he wants to be. He will have a lot of pace pressure to overcome to get to the lead - if he can, he might run wire to wire with this - but if he can't, this might be too much for him. He will be solidly bet on Saturday and is hard to ignore, but the hot pace is definitely a concern.

Preakness 2026 Contender Profiles



7 - The Hell We Did Lexington Runner-Up

Trainer: Todd Fincher
Jockey: Luis Saez
Sire: Authentic
Dam: Rose's Desert

Past Performances:

Record: 4 | 2-2-0 \$134,818

Key Races:

Mar15 ALW (Sun | 6f)
Won by 13 Lengths
Eyepopping Performance
Raw Speed After Stalking
High Speed Figure
Lexington (Kee | 8.5f | G3)
2nd in First Two Turn Event
Carried His Speed Routing
Briefly Led but Outkicked Late
Good Step Up in Class

Running Style:

Stalker/Presser
Sprinting Speed Stretching Out

Strengths:

- One of the Fastest Horses in the Race
- Consistently High Speed Figures
- Stretching Sprinting Speed Long
- Elite Pedigree on Both Sides (Half to Senor Buscador)
- Powerful Morning Works with a Monstrous Gallop

Weaknesses:

- Distance Concerns
- Class Concerns

The Hell We Did brings New Mexico to the Preakness! The son of Rose's Desert (dam of Saudi Cup winner Senor Buscador and a New Mexico-bred herself) spent the winter at Zia Park and Sunland Park before heading to Keeneland for the Lexington to prove himself as a Preakness contender. His three races to start his career, and especially his allowance win, were visually impressive and he has only seemed to grow from there. He represents a great value play with a very high ceiling, assuming he can continue to carry his speed (which is tactical) to the distance and be able to contend with a field like this. A must use on all tickets at a good price.



8 - Bull By The Horns Rushaway Winner

Trainer: Saffie Joseph Jr.
Jockey: Micah Husbands
Sire: Essential Quality
Dam: No Sweat

Past Performances:

Record: 5 | 2-0-2 \$187,115

Key Races:

Nov01 MSW (GP | 8f)
Won by 6.5 Lengths
Modest Speed Figure, but Honest
Fountain of Youth (GP | 8.5f | G2)
7th Well Beaten
Rushaway (TP | 8.5f)
Won with Massive Wide Rally
Showed Great Late Speed
Beat Lexington Winner Trendsetter
Ridden by John Velazquez

Running Style:

Deep Closer
Needs an Early Pace Collapse

Strengths:

- Focused Late Runner
- Tremendous Turn of Foot
- Strong Wide Moves

Weaknesses:

- Needs a Pace Setup
- Speed Figures Incredibly Low
- Good Performances Only Came at Short Odds
- Class Concerns
- Perhaps Better on Turf

Bull By The Horns offers an interesting puzzle - a deep closer with a lot of late speed who just hasn't put it together at the top class. His Fountain of Youth is likely closer to his ceiling than his Rushaway, with him not being able to make the right closing move to get anywhere near a win. His is a huge fade candidate in this race - one that should easily be tossed and kept aside. However, his closing kick and this speed laden race is perfect for him to have a shot at the supers. The best spot for him is using him at the bottom of the superfectas, as its very possible he can pick off tiring horses, but as a win contender, he has pretty much no shot in this race.



9 - Iron Honor Gotham Winner

Trainer: Chad Brown
Jockey: Flavien Prat
Sire: Nyquist
Dam: Orenca

Past Performances:

Record: 3 | 2-0-0 \$229,250

Key Races:

Dec13 MSW (Aqu | 6f)
Won in a Massive Effort
Huge Win on Debut
Gotham (Aqu | 8f | G3)
Won with a Slight Step Back
Wood Memorial (Aqu | 9f | G2)
7th and Well Beaten
Faded to Deep Closers
Blistering Early Pace to Stalk
Caught Wide & With Trouble

Running Style:

Tactical Stalker
Sits in Rhythm with the Pacesetters

Strengths:

- Skipping the Derby is an Elite Angle for Chad Brown
- Raw Power in Speed Figures
- Last Race was a Toss Out - Two Wins were Both Solid
- Comes in Fresh
- Tactical and Versatile

Weaknesses:

- Questions Going Around Two Turns
- Stamina Concerns
- Might be Forced Too Fast
- Uninspiring Workouts

Iron Honor is a new shooter who, on paper, looks like the class of the field. While his Wood Memorial was a failure by all accounts as the favorite, that was a race that favored deep closers like Albus, Right to Party, and Ocelli (all double digits off the pace at first call) - so that is one performance that can be scratched out. But... it might tell the tale of what happens on Saturday, as a very hot pace will be in store for the Preakness - can he overcome that this time? Flavien Prat gets aboard to see if he can right the ship. With all the tactical speed and awareness in the world, this horse should be one to watch if he can step up and find his footing with a pace setup not to his liking.

Preakness 2026 Contender Profiles



10 - Napoleon Solo Champagne Winner

Trainer: Chad Summers
Jockey: Paco Lopez
Sire: Liam's Map
Dam: Atomic Blonde

Past Performances:

Record: 4 | 2-0-0 \$360,520

Key Races:

Champagne [Aqu | 8f | G1]
Won in a Freak Performance
Fountain of Youth [GP | 8.5f | G2]
5th and Well Beaten
Just Short on Fitness
Wood Memorial [Aqu | 9f | G2]
5th after Weakening
Set the Pace
Was Dealing with a Heel Bruise
Better Effort Than it Looked

Running Style:

Front Runner
Speed of the Speed

Strengths:

- Blitzing Fast with Good Break
- Sets Tough to Follow Fractions
- Strong Workouts
- His Best Beats This Field

Weaknesses:

- Still Trying to Find His Best Stuff
- Not in a Good Form Cycle
- Hasn't Won Around Two Turns
- Doesn't Like Pace Pressure

Napoleon Solo is another horse with a ton of speed that would love to be on the lead early. He showed in his maiden victory that he can stalk, but he has since developed into a need the lead type - someone who is stubborn and wants to be in front early. Once again, the Wood Memorial was not a good race for front runners (he was a big reason for that) with how fast that race was, but perhaps he was short of fitness and needed that race, along side the injury that he had during it. If he is fully health coming into this race and gets back to his Champagne winning form, then maybe he has a chance - which would be one heck of a training job for Chad Summers.



11 - Corona de Oro Lexington Third

Trainer: Dallas Stewart
Jockey: John Velazquez
Sire: Bolt d'Oro
Dam: Lemon de Oro

Past Performances:

Record: 5 | 1-1-2 \$92,540

Key Races:

Mar07 MSW [FG | 8.5f]
Won Drawing Away
Finally Carried His Speed
Career Best Effort
Lexington [Kee | 8.5f | G3]
3rd in Low Class Company
Stalked and Lunged
Out Dueled Down the Stretch

Running Style:

Pressing Stalker
Perhaps a Need the Lead Type

Strengths:

- Solid Morning Works
- Tactical Versatility
- Improving Even in Losses

Weaknesses:

- Significant Figure Gap
- Lack of Grade 1 Exposure
- Slow Starting Tendencies
- Could Not Beat Weaker Group in Last Start
- No Battling Qualities

Corona de Oro is a developing three-year-old that is perhaps better suited against this field than the Kentucky Derby where he was an also-eligible. He doesn't give you a lot of confidence in his races, and is very much a need the lead type. The wide draw may help him get into a slightly better spot near the front, but with how much speed is in this race, its hard to see how he gets comfortable. This is a tough asking, but if anyone is going to blow up the exactas and trifectas, it's a Dallas Stewart runner. He has a chance to hang around for a piece, but as a win contender - this is a very tough asking. Definitely use him in the exotics to try and get a price though.



12 - Incredibolt Virginia Derby Winner

Trainer: Riley Mott
Jockey: Jaime Torres
Sire: Bolt d'Oro
Dam: Sapphire Spitfire

Past Performances:

Record: 6 | 3-0-0 \$498,681

Key Races:

Street Sense [CD | 8.5f | G3]
Won with Clearing Rally
Peak Form
Virginia Derby [CNL | 9f]
Won after Kicking Clear
Quick at 1:47.76
Aided by Lower Class
Kentucky Derby [CD | 10f | G1]
6th in Good Effort
Positioned Well Early and Gaining

Running Style:

Patient Stalker
Makes One Big Move Late

Strengths:

- Proven Versatility
- Exceptional Closing Kick
- Extends Sprinting Speed Down the Stretch
- In a Strong Form Cycle
- Able to Stalk Very Well

Weaknesses:

- Unexplained Holy Bull Collapse
- Far Lower Best Speed Figures
- Long Rest from Last Out
- Seems to be Pace Dependent
- May be a Class Below this Field

Incredibolt is a sleeper candidate for some, coming off a solid effort in the Kentucky Derby and a sneaky good win in the Virginia Derby. While nothing on his form jumps out at anyone, outside of his unexplained Holy Bull effort, he has been nothing but impressive. Jaime Torres should give him a closing ride, similar to what he gave Albus in the Wood Memorial, which may be enough to win here. The only question is how much does he have left in the tank after two weeks ago - but Riley Mott isn't the type of trainer to try something he doesn't think that he has a chance to do well in. This is a good spot for him and he can easily run them all down with a clean trip.

Preakness 2026 Contender Profiles



13 - Great White John Battaglia Winner

Trainer: John Ennis
Jockey: Alex Achard
Sire: Volatile
Dam: Kelly Bag

Past Performances:

Record: 4 | 2-0-0 \$202,495

Key Races:

Leonatus (8f | TP)
5th after Problematic Trip
Unable to Recover Checked Start
John Battaglia (L | 8.5f | TP)
Won over Fulleffort
Stretched Out Nicely at Big Odds
Blue Grass (G1 | 9f | KEE)
5th and Well Beaten
Went to Unexpected Early Lead
Unable to Sustain Any Speed

Running Style:

Pressing Stalker
Needs to Track; Cannot Lead

Strengths:

- Massive Physical Frame and Stride
- Professional Demeanor
- Potentially Versatile Running Style

Weaknesses:

- Gate Clumsiness
- Slow Starts
- Dirt Surface Question Mark
- Pedigree Suggests Distance Concerns

Great White is a big sized horse that has all the ability to run, but his road to the Triple Crown hasn't necessarily shown his ability. His body of work at Turfway Park was on par with Fulleffort, but his Blue Grass (and only race on dirt) showed an empty effort late where he was tired and not the pace of Further Ado, though no one really was that day. When he is on, he is a sharp horse, but he has two very clear blemishes on his record and not much to really look at. Of course all eyes were on him two weeks ago when he flipped before the Kentucky Derby, scratching him there and cementing himself with a spot in this field. He serves a good exotic chance, but not a win play.



14 - Pretty Boy Miah

Trainer: Jeremiah Englehart
Jockey: Ricardo Santana Jr.
Sire: Beau Liam
Dam: Tryingtolookpretty

Past Performances:

Record: 4 | 2-1-0 \$95,800

Key Races:

Mar29 MSW (Aqu | 6.5f)
Won with Added Blinkers
Fought to the Front
Commanding Win
Apr25 SOC (Aqu | 8f)
Won Drawing Away
Impressive Speed Figure

Running Style:

Front Runner
Need the Lead Type

Strengths:

- Gained Speed with Blinkers On

Weaknesses:

- Huge Step Up in Class
- Doesn't Know How to Pass Horses
- Need the Lead
- Distance Questions

Pretty Boy Miah is a random addition to the field to fill it out - but there is no chance for him here. He would need all of the speed horses to stay back and give him a clear gap... and that is not happening. This is a tough test - not just with the pace, but also the step up in class and distance. The only impact he has on this field is guaranteeing an honest and fast pace, which will favor the stalkers and closers in this field. Very much a headscratching move to put him here by Jeremiah Englehart, but he was Triple Crown nominated so I guess why not try. Just not a horse to even try to play, even with speed figures suggesting he fits here - hard to predict an angle for him to do well.

Preakness 2026 Contenders & Pretenders

Win Contenders

1 - Taj Mahal: The undefeated king of Laurel Park enters his home-court championship after a breathtaking 8-length win in the Federico Tesio. Analytics favor his "home-field" advantage and 92 Beyer speed figure. While the rail post is risky in a 14-horse field, his front-running brilliance and familiarity with this specific dirt surface make him the most dangerous threat to wire the field from start to finish.

2 - Ocelli: Despite his maiden status, Ocelli's 3rd-place finish in the Kentucky Derby—where he led at the 1 3/16-mile pole—is the strongest analytical piece in the race. He thrives on the exact distance of the Preakness and gains the services of Tyler Gaffalione. With a blistering pace projected up front, he is the primary beneficiary to close with a rush and finally visit the winner's circle in a Grade 1 classic.

9 - Iron Honor: Chad Brown follows his winning "new shooter" blueprint, skipping the Derby to freshen this high-figure colt. His 95 debut Beyer remains the field's benchmark. If you toss his Wood Memorial disaster due to a wide trip, he is statistically the fastest horse in training. Flavien Prat takes the mount, providing the elite tactical navigation required to sit off the leaders and pounce during the turn.

12 - Incredibolt: This tactical stalker comes off a gritty 6th-place Derby finish where he was beaten only 4 lengths. Analytics highlight his 100 Brisnet Speed Rating and elite "Late Pace" figures. Trained by Riley Mott, he possesses the professional "spurting" ability to navigate through traffic. If he can overcome the wide draw in Post 12, he has the stamina and class to outwork the tired front-runners.

Exotics Opportunities

6 - Chip Honcho: A fresh speedster from the Steve Asmussen barn, he owns a 92 Beyer that rivals the favorites. Bypassing the Derby allows him to bring maximum energy to Laurel. With the shortened stretch, his front-running style is a major asset if he can clear the rail-bound speed. He is a mandatory inclusion in all exactas, especially with Jose Ortiz, who chose this mount over several other high-profile runners.

7 - The Hell We Did: The definitive "wiseguy" horse, he carries the pedigree of Senor Buscador and a world-class 92 Beyer from New Mexico. His Lexington Stakes 2nd-place effort showed he could take his high-end speed on the road. Luis Saez is an aggressive pilot who will likely place him in the "catbird seat" just behind the lead. He is the most likely longshot to disrupt the top tier.

10 - Napoleon Solo: The only Grade 1 winner in the field, he is the "speed of the speed." While he has struggled at two turns, his recent 1:10 bullet workouts suggest a return to his brilliant Champagne Stakes form. Paco Lopez will likely send him hard from the gate. If he manages to clear the field without a suicidal duel, the shorter Laurel stretch makes him a dangerous threat.

5 - Talkin: A "fresh shooter" who skipped the Derby to point for this spot under Danny Gargan. Securing Irad Ortiz Jr. is a massive upgrade for this Grade 1-placed stalker. While he hasn't won since his debut, his consistency in high-level company makes him a high-probability candidate to finish in the trifecta. He thrives on a clean stalking trip and should be picking up the pieces late.

3 - Crupper: An honest "grinder" from Oaklawn Park, Crupper lacks brilliance but possesses elite stamina. Analytics suggest he is a "sustained pace" horse who won't quit in the stretch. At 30-1, he is the ultimate "Superfecta filler" who will be passing tired front-runners while others are hitting the wall. Junior Alvarado's presence adds further confidence to his ability to outrun his longshot odds.

13 - Great White: A physically imposing 17.2-hand giant, he was a dramatic late scratch in the Derby. While his dirt form is questionable compared to his synthetic success, his massive stride allows him to sustain a long closing move. If he handles the Laurel surface and avoids another gate incident, he is capable of a wide, sweeping run that could land him a minor share of the exotics.

Tosses

4 - Robusta: While he showed promise in the San Felipe, his 14th-place Derby finish and erratic speed figures make him difficult to trust. He has yet to prove he can handle the transition to the East Coast dirt or maintain his form against Grade 1 talent outside of California. In a field this deep with established tactical profiles, he appears overmatched and lacks a definitive edge.

8 - Bull By The Horns: Despite the high-percentage Saffie Joseph Jr. barn, this colt's best figures are roughly 20 lengths behind the favorites. He appears to be a "synthetic specialist" whose dirt attempts have resulted in double-digit losses. Without a significant leap in raw speed, his deep-closing style will likely leave him with too much ground to make up on a track that typically rewards tactical speed.

11 - Corona De Oro: A "need-the-lead" front-runner who drew outside most of the other speed. Analytics suggest he hits a stamina "wall" at 1 1/16 miles, making this 1 3/16-mile test a massive hurdle. With heavy pressure expected from Taj Mahal and Chip Honcho, he is likely to be swept up in a pace meltdown. His best chance requires a lone lead he won't get.

14 - Pretty Boy Miah: A rapidly improving runner who is taking a gargantuan class leap from the starter-allowance ranks. While his speed figures are respectable, the #14 post in a speed-heavy Preakness is a tactical nightmare. He will be forced to use immense energy early just to clear the field, likely leaving him empty when the elite class of Ocelli and Iron Honor begins their charge.

Preakness 2026 Race Projection

The Start and First Turn (Quarter Mile - Approx. :23.00):

As the gates fly open, expect an immediate, high-stakes drag race toward the first turn. From the rail, Taj Mahal will be urged aggressively by Sheldon Russell to protect his home-court position, but he faces immediate external pressure. From the far outside, Pretty Boy Miah and Napoleon Solo (with Paco Lopez aboard) will be sent on "suicide missions" to clear the field. Analytics project a blistering opening quarter of :23.00. By the time the field hits the first turn, Napoleon Solo is likely to stick his neck in front, with Taj Mahal stalking right behind and Chip Honcho tracking intently in third. Corona de Oro will likely be caught three-wide, forced to use immense energy to stay within striking distance. Meanwhile, the favorites Iron Honor and Incredibolt will look to duck inside or find a seam mid-pack, settling roughly six lengths off the lead to avoid the initial spray of dirt.

Down the Backstretch (Half Mile - Approx. :46.40):

As the field moves down the Laurel backstretch, the "speed duel" begins to take its toll. Napoleon Solo and Taj Mahal will likely continue to trade punches through a projected half-mile split of :46.40. This is the "danger zone" where the analytics suggest the front-runners may begin to overextend themselves. Chip Honcho will sit in the "catbird seat" just behind them, waiting for one of the leaders to blink. In the second flight, The Hell We Did and Iron Honor will start to creep closer, with Flavien Prat beginning to ask Iron Honor for a bit more focus. Behind them, the "wiseguy" closer Ocelli remains patient, trailing by ten lengths but finding a rhythm in the clear. The "grinder" Crupper and the massive Great White will be steady in the back, waiting for the high-octane pace to inevitably collapse as the field approaches the far turn.

The Far Turn (Six Furlongs - Approx. 1:11.70):

This is where the race is won or lost. As the leaders hit the 3/4-mile mark in 1:11.70, slowing it down for the end of the race, the "burners" like Napoleon Solo and Pretty Boy Miah will likely begin to shorten their strides. Taj Mahal will use his grit to try and shake loose, but the "stalkers" are now in full flight. Iron Honor and Incredibolt will launch their bids simultaneously, circling the tiring speed elements. Ocelli will begin his signature wide, sweeping run, picking up speed as he passes a fading Corona de Oro. While the leaders are slowing down, Ocelli and Incredibolt are projected to be running their fastest furlongs of the race. As they hit the top of the turn, the crowd will roar for the local hero Taj Mahal, but the closers will be looming like a shadow on his outside shoulder.

The Finish (1 3/16 Miles - Approx. Final Time 1:55.50):

As they turn for home, Taj Mahal will hold a slim lead, but he will be weary from the early duel. Iron Honor will be towards the front at the eighth pole, but the "one-run" closers are coming with a vengeance. Ocelli will unleash a devastating final surge, fueled by the same stamina that saw him leading at this exact distance in the Kentucky Derby. He will likely pass a gutsy Incredibolt in the final fifty yards. In a heart-pounding finish, Ocelli (potentially ending a 138-year drought for maidens in the Preakness) is projected to hit the wire in a blanket finish alongside Iron Honor and the local king Taj Mahal - with it being anyone's chance at victory.

Preakness 2026 Pace Projection

Likely Speed:

Chip Honcho
Napoleon Solo
Corona De Oro
Pretty Boy Miah

Pace Pressers/Stalkers:

Taj Mahal
Robusta
Talkin
The Hell We Did
Iron Honor
Incredibolt

Mid-Pack:

Crupper
Great White

Closers:

Ocelli
Bull By The Horns

Most Likely Pace Scenario - A Pace Meltdown:

The 2026 Preakness pace is projected as a "suicide duel" due to the volatile concentration of early speed. With four dedicated front-runners—including Napoleon Solo and Pretty Boy Miah—analytics suggest an opening quarter in a blistering :22.8 to :23.1. Paco Lopez and Ricardo Santana Jr. are statistically the most aggressive riders in the field, likely forcing Sheldon Russell and Taj Mahal to stalk the pace from the rail to avoid being forced too fast too quickly.

This "heat-seeking" conflict should produce a half-mile split near :46.2, well faster than the historical par for 1 3/16 miles. While Laurel typically aids speed, the sheer volume of "burners" creates a high probability of a Pace Meltdown. This scenario favors tactical stalkers like Iron Honor and Incredibolt, who can sit five lengths back in the "catbird seat." Ultimately, the excessive early energy distribution is tailor-made for a closer like Ocelli to mow down a field of exhausted front-runners in the final furlong.

Preakness 2026 Top Three Selections

Taj Mahal Top Selection

Taj Mahal looks to become the king of Maryland if he can take the Preakness on his home track. The Federico Tesio takes an undefeated record into the race.

Russell Factor: Brittany Russell's dominance at Laurel is statistically elite. Taj Mahal isn't just shipping in; he's stabled in Barn 5. He sleeps in his own stall and breezes over this specific dirt daily. This lack of travel stress provides a distinct physical edge over Derby-weary rivals.

Home Advantage: Laurel heavily favors front-runners in route races. The 1 3/16-mile race ends at the first finish line providing a speed-favoring geometry that even if Taj Mahal sets a contested pace, deep closers will have a lot less room to catch.

The Tesio Trajectory: His 8-length romp in the Federico Tesio earned a 92 Beyer that visually appeared effortless. From the rail, Sheldon Russell will likely gun him early to a stalking trip, saving his energy for later.

Taj Mahal possesses the rare combination of a high cruising gear, tactical versatility, and an intimate relationship with the Laurel surface. If he clears the first turn with a stalking trip, avoiding getting hurt by the deadly pace up front, his home-court feel will give him a great chance of having a Maryland horse "lift" the Woodlawn Vase. His previous three races have been impressive and his figures and style suggest he will fit really well with this group - just has to avoid the deadly upfront pace.

Ocelli Second Selection

Ocelli aims to make history - as no maiden has won the Preakness since 1888, but the pace suggests a race that fits Ocelli's running style way - a dream scenario!

Pace Meltdown: Analysis projects a volatile duel up front. With four pure front-runners battling through a blistering half-mile, the early speed is destined to collapse. This high-energy exertion perfectly maps to Ocelli's sweeping, off-the-pace running style, setting the race up for a deep closer.

Distance: Ocelli's Kentucky Derby data provides the ultimate handicapping angle. While he finished an agonizingly close third, tracking data shows he was actually leading the Derby field at the exact 1 3/16-mile mark. The slight cutback is his absolute sweet spot.

Peak Form: Since trainer Whit Beckman removed his blinkers two starts ago, Ocelli's speed figures have skyrocketed. Paired with Gaffalione, Ocelli is in the best condition of his career - peaking at the right time.

Ocelli is not just a compelling underdog story; he is the beneficiary of a flawed, speed-heavy race profile. As the front-runners hit a wall at Laurel Park, Ocelli's sustained momentum will swallow the exhausted field, allowing him to break his maiden in historic, Grade 1 fashion. He showed his impressive turn of foot in the Kentucky Derby, and everything suggests he should come back with just about the same late speed this time. This race suggests a closer - he could be the one!

The Hell We Did Third Selection

The Hell We Did is a southwest shipper who looks to follow in his half-brother's footsteps and be an elite racehorse under Todd Fincher's watch.

Tactical Catbird Seat: Pace analysis guarantees a frantic early tempo. With a need-the-lead speedsters destroying each other up front, Luis Saez will drop The Hell We Did into the perfect position. Sitting comfortably three lengths off the rail duel, he will get the first run before the short stretch.

Speed Figure Parity: His 13-length demolition at Sunland earned a massive 92 Beyer, putting his raw ceiling squarely on par with the favorites. His subsequent strong runner-up finish in the Lexington proved he can carry that elite speed on the road.

World-Class Pedigree: Sired by Kentucky Derby champion Authentic and sharing a dam with Saudi Cup winner Senor Buscador, he is genetically built to thrive at the classic 1 3/16-mile distance.

The Hell We Did offers the perfect convergence of stamina pedigree, peaking speed figures, and a flawless pace setup. As the front-runners exhaust themselves entering the stretch, Saez will press the button, propelling this talented longshot past the leaders for a historic Grade 1 upset. If he can pull it off, it would be one hell of a story for New Mexico - getting a son of one of their best mares, and a horse that wintered at Zia Park & Sunland - into a Triple Crown winner's circle!

Preakness 2026 Best Bets

Win Bets:

- 1 - Taj Mahal
- 2 - Ocelli
- 7 - The Hell We Did

Exacta Bets:

- Exacta Box:
1, 2, 9, 12
- Exacta:
2 / 1, 7, 9, 12
- Exacta:
1, 2, 7 / 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13
- Exacta:
1, 6 / 1, 2, 6, 10

Trifecta Bets:

- Trifecta:
1, 2 /
1, 2, 9, 12 /
1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12, 13
- Trifecta:
1, 2, 9 /
2, 12 /
1, 5, 7, 9
- Trifecta Box:
1, 2, 7, 12

Superfecta Bets:

- Superfecta:
1, 2 /
1, 2, 9, 12 /
1, 2, 7, 9, 12 /
1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13
- Superfecta:
2 /
12, 13 /
8, 12, 13 /
3, 5, 8

Preakness 2026 Friday Stakes Selections

Race 8 - Miss Preakness Stakes (Grade III)

Post Time: 3:20pm ET

6 Furlongs

Dirt

\$150,000

Fillies, Three Year Olds

1 - Little Miss Curlin:

The Steve Asmussen trainee is the class of the field, carrying a 5-for-6 lifetime record into her graded stakes debut. While her Louisiana-bred wins were dominant, her tactical adaptability is her greatest asset. With Jose Ortiz in the irons, expect her to save ground on the rail before pouncing at the top of the short Laurel stretch.

Top Three Selections

2 - Peach Tie:

The "Home Court" play of the day. Trained by Brittany Russell and ridden by husband Sheldon Russell, this filly has never finished out of the money in seven career starts. She has been ultra-consistent at Laurel, winning three of her last four. Her familiarity with the surface and recent races makes her a reliable choice.

5 - Tessellate:

If the pace meltdown occurs as projected, Tessellate is the one most likely to blow up the tote board. Shipping from Tampa Bay Downs for Saffie Joseph Jr., she possesses the highest "Late Pace" rating in the field. Irad Ortiz Jr. takes the mount, signaling that the connections are hunting for a graded win on her resume.

Betting Strategy

Exacta Box: 1, 2, 5

Trifecta: 1, 2 / 1, 2, 4, 5 / 1, 2, 4, 5, 7

Race 9 - Hilltop Stakes

Post Time: 3:54pm ET

1 Mile

Turf

\$125,000

Fillies, Three Year Olds

2 - Ultimate Love:

The class of the field by any metric. After an undefeated run through the Mid-Atlantic juvenile season—including a dominant win in the listed Selima at Laurel—she finished a troubled fifth in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf. Training sharply at Fair Hill, she returns to her favorite surface with Hall of Famer John Velazquez and is the most likely winner if she is anywhere near 90% fit.

Top Three Selections

3 - Coach Mazzula:

The definitive Horse for Course play. This Brittany Russell trainee is in peak physical form, evidenced by her track-record-setting performance (1:40.75) at 1 1/16 miles on the Laurel turf on April 18th. As a daughter of Authentic, she possesses elite tactical speed and a fitness advantage over the favorite, making her the primary threat to pull the upset.

1 - Use Me:

The upside shipper for Brendan Walsh and Tyler Gaffalione. This Irish-bred filly displayed an impressive late kick when breaking her maiden by two lengths at Keeneland last month. If the pace is even slightly contested between the top two, her European turn of foot will make her the most dangerous horse passing tired rivals in the final furlong.

Betting Strategy

Trifecta: 2, 3 / 1, 2, 3 / 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Exacta: 1, 2, 3 / 1, 2, 3, 4, 7

Race 10 - Allaire DuPont Distaff Stakes

Post Time: 4:28pm ET

1 1/8 Miles

Dirt

\$125,000

Fillies And Mares, Three Year Olds And Upward

2 - Margie's Intention:

The definitive class of the field and a Maryland favorite after her Grade 2 Black-Eyed Susan triumph last year. While winless in four starts since, she has been competing against the elite in races like the Delaware Oaks, Alabama, and Beldame. Predictive analytics favor her "closer" style into this projected pace, and Irad Ortiz Jr. returning to the irons suggests a max-effort performance is expected.

Top Three Selections

4 - Complexity Jane:

If any horse can defy the "class" of the favorite, it is this local specialist. With a 5-for-7 record at Laurel (with wins in the Weber City Miss, Thirty Eight Go Go, & Carousel), she possesses an intimate knowledge of the surface and its kickback. If she can clear the early pressers and establish a rhythmic lead, the short run to the first turn could keep her clear of trouble.

6 - Queen Azteca:

The now horse for trainer Rodolphe Brisset. Adding blinkers has transformed this filly, as evidenced by her sharp 86 Beyer victory at Keeneland last month. Brisset is tweaking the equipment to a "shorter cup" today to ensure she rates better at the 1 1/8-mile distance. With Flavien Prat aboard, she is the most likely candidate to get the first run on the favorite.

Betting Strategy

Exacta: 4, 6, 7 / 2

Trifecta: 2, 4 / 2, 4, 6, 7 / 1, 4, 6, 7, 8

Preakness 2026 Friday Stakes Selections

Race 11 - The Very One Stakes

Post Time: 5:02pm ET

5.5 Furlongs

Turf

\$100,000

Fillies And Mares, Three Year Olds And Upward

5 - Saturday Flirt:

The objective class of the field. Trained by Wesley Ward and ridden by Irad Ortiz Jr., this filly possesses the highest raw turf sprint speed figures. Ward's operation is lethal in these spots, and her elite gate speed makes her the overwhelming analytical favorite to control the race early.

Top Three Selections

3 - Lost And Found:

The premier local threat from the dominant Brittany Russell barn. With Sheldon Russell aboard, this four-year-old brings a definitive "horse for course" advantage, having recorded her highest speed figures over this specific Laurel turf. Her tactical pressing style is perfectly suited to stalk and pressure the favorite

2 - Sporting Lady:

A high-value stalker trained by Keri Brion with Tyler Gaffalione in the irons. She boasts a previous victory over this exact Laurel course and distance. Her "Late Pace" analytics suggest she is the most likely candidate to run down the leaders if the early fractions become dangerously fast.

Betting Strategy

Exacta: 5 / 2, 3, 9

Trifecta: 5 / 2, 3 / 1, 2, 3, 8, 9

Race 12 - Pimlico Special Stakes (Grade III)

Post Time: 5:37pm ET

1 3/16 Miles

Dirt

\$250,000

Three Year Olds And Upward

3 - San Siro:

A model of consistency, this Brendan Walsh trainee has hit the board in consecutive Grade 3s (Essex, Ben Ali) against elite company. Analytics highlight his 158 Final Time Rating as a field-best metric. Moving from the far outside last year to Post 3 today, he projects a ground-saving trip that should allow his sustained closing kick to swallow a modest pace.

Top Three Selections

4 - Awesome Aaron:

The defending champion returns with Hall of Famer John Velazquez, a duo that excels in "pace-less" scenarios. While he hasn't won this year, his 155 Final Time Rating in the Ben Ali suggests he is rounding into peak form. His ability to stalk just off the lead makes him the primary tactical beneficiary if the early fractions crawl.

2 - Navajo Warrior:

Shipping in for Saffie Joseph Jr., this Candy Ride gelding brings the highest recent speed figure after a dominant Gulfstream score. With Flavien Prat aboard, he is the "Class of the Race." While the 1 3/16-mile distance is a career-long question mark, his internal fractions suggest he can dictate the tempo if the other speed elements concede the rail.

Betting Strategy

Win/Place: 3

Exacta: 3, 4 / 2, 3, 4, 6

Trifecta: 3 / 2, 4, 6 / 1, 2, 4, 6, 7

Race 13 - George E. Mitchell Black-Eyed Susan Stakes (Grade II)

Post Time: 6:14pm ET

1 1/8 Miles

Dirt

\$300,000

Fillies, Three Year Olds

9 - A.P.'s Girl:

She is the logical choice for those looking to avoid the favorite. Her second-place finish in the local Weber City Miss was better than it looked; she navigated a collapsing pace and was the only horse in the lead pack to keep grinding through the wire. With Irad Ortiz Jr. picking up the mount for Peter Eurton, she's perfectly positioned for a mid-pack stalking trip that should see her move first into the long Laurel stretch.

Top Three Selections

5 - Braken Poppa:

This Louisiana-bred comes in on a four-race win streak, though she's facing open Grade 2 company for the first time. While she has been "an absolute handful" in the mornings, she showed grit winning her first two-turn start in the Crescent City Oaks. If Jose Ortiz can get her to relax behind the early speed of Jumping the Gun, she has the raw talent to dominate the late stages.

6 - Haute Diva:

Trained by Patrick Biancone, she was significantly overmatched in the Gulfstream Park Oaks, but a closer look at the "class drop" analytics shows she belongs here. She had a wide, non-effort trip in Florida and now returns to a track where her closing style should be far more effective. At double-digit odds, she is the primary candidate to blow up the exotics if the leaders duel too hard.

Betting Strategy

Exacta: 5, 9 / 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10

Trifecta: 5, 9 / 3, 5, 6, 9 / 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10

Preakness 2026 Saturday Stakes Selections

Race 4 - Skipat Stakes

Post Time: 12:16pm ET

6 Furlongs

Dirt

\$125,000

Fillies And Mares, Three Year Olds And Upward

3 - Kappa Kappa:

Trained by Butch Reid, this Grade 2 Raven Run winner is making her 2026 debut. While the layoff is a concern, her training reports from Parx have been "brilliant." As a stalker, she is perfectly positioned to watch the speed duel unfold before John Velazquez pulls the trigger at the top of the stretch.

Top Three Selections

7 - Modo:

The morning-line favorite and current form choice. Ridden by Irad Ortiz Jr., this Texas-bred has been ultra-consistent in high-level sprints. Her speed figures (consistent 90+ Beyers) make her the horse to beat. However, from the outside post, she may be forced to use extra energy early to clear the field, making her vulnerable to a late charge.

6 - Complexity Jane:

(If she goes here over the Allaire DuPont Distaff) Trained by the high-percentage Brittany Russell, this filly owns an intimate knowledge of the Laurel surface. While her stakes record is lighter than the top two, her "Late Pace" ratings are among the best in the field. At double-digit odds, she is the primary candidate to blow up the exotics if the pace collapses.

Betting Strategy

Exacta: 3 / 1, 4, 6, 7

Trifecta: 3 / 6, 7 / 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7

Race 6 - Sir Barton Stakes

Post Time: 1:28pm ET

1 1/16 Mile

Dirt

\$100,000

Three Year Olds

7 - Reagan's Honor:

Trained by Cherie DeVaux, this son of Honor A.P. is seeking redemption after a wide, exhausting trip in the Grade 1 Blue Grass. Predictive analytics suggest he is far superior to this field at the 1 1/16-mile distance, where he previously notched back-to-back wins by a combined eight lengths. With Jose Ortiz back aboard, he is the most likely winner if he settles early.

Top Three Selections

4 - Final Story:

Ridden by Irad Ortiz Jr., this Candy Ride colt brings an elite 109 Speed Rating into the race. While his stakes experience is limited, Cox's success with "new shooters" in Mid-Atlantic stakes is statistically overwhelming. He possesses the tactical speed to sit just off the leaders and should get the first run on the favorite.

5 - Falcon Jet:

This Justify colt is 1-for-1 at Laurel Park, having won his maiden by nearly three lengths with a 99 Speed Rating. While stepping up in class, he is stabled on-site and has been training "lights out." At double-digit odds, he offers the best mathematical value to upend the favorites.

Betting Strategy

Trifecta: 7 / 4, 5 / 2, 3, 4, 5

Race 7 - Chick Lang Stakes

Post Time: 2:07pm ET

6 Furlongs

Dirt

\$150,000

Three Year Olds

4 - Obliteration:

Steve Asmussen's colt won the Renaissance Stakes by 7 1/2 lengths earlier this year before a heroic second in the Saudi Derby (G3). With a massive 10 1/2-length G3 Sanford win on his resume, his raw speed and class are statistically superior to this field.

Top Three Selections

6 - Shane's Wonder:

The undefeated threat from Parx. He has won his first three starts by a combined 19 lengths, including a dominant score in the Wait For It Stakes with an 86 Beyer. While he faces a major class test, his "dazzling foot" makes him the most dangerous horse to catch if he can clear the favorite early.

7 - Top Manipulator:

Trained by Timothy Keefe, this Maryland-bred recently upset a feature at Laurel in April with a powerful late surge. If Shane's Wonder and Obliteration engage in a "suicide duel," Top Manipulator is the most likely candidate to swallow the field in the final 100 yards at a massive price.

Betting Strategy

Exacta: 4, 6 / 1, 4, 5, 6, 7

Trifecta: 4, 6 / 4, 5, 6, 7 / 1, 2, 5, 7, 8

Preakness 2026 Saturday Stakes Selections

Race 8 - Maryland Sprint Stakes (Grade III)

Post Time: 2:48pm ET

6 Furlongs

Dirt

\$150,000

Three Year Olds And Upward

4: Haileysfirstnotion

This Gary Capuano-trained Maryland-bred returned from a long layoff on May 1st to dominate a Laurel allowance by 7 3/4 lengths, stopping the clock in a blistering 1:09.19. While he is returning on just 15 days' rest, his intimate knowledge of the Laurel surface and current form peak make him the one to catch.

Top Three Selections

5 - Floodlites:

Wesley Ward's 4-year-old was visually impressive in his season debut at Keeneland, winning by four lengths. While he will face immediate pressure from the local speed, his raw "Speed Figure" ceiling (consistent high-90s Beyers) is statistically the highest in the field. If he clears the #4, he may simply be too fast.

7 - Hymn:

This son of McKinzie has been chasing much faster horses in Kentucky and should find the expected pace duel in Maryland exactly to his liking. Analytics suggest he is the primary beneficiary of a pace meltdown. At double-digit odds, he is a must-use to inflate the value of your exotic tickets.

Betting Strategy

Exacta: 4, 5 / 2, 4, 5, 6, 7

Trifecta: 4, 5 / 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 / 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

Race 9 - James W. Murphy Stakes

Post Time: 3:30pm ET

1 Mile

Turf

\$100,000

Three Year Olds

5 - Proton:

Trained by Graham Motion, this son of Astern has a definitive affinity for the Laurel turf, having won the Laurel Futurity here as a juvenile. While his recent effort in the Grade 3 Transylvania at Keeneland was underwhelming, his return to the Mid-Atlantic circuit—combined with the return of John Velazquez—makes him the most logical winner and the field's analytical anchor.

Top Three Selections

6 - Turf Star:

Motion's other entry brings the highest ceiling in the field. He is a Grade 2 Bourbon Stakes runner-up who contested the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf last fall. While he is still hunting for his first stakes win, his raw Speed Figures and ability to sustain a long, grinding run on the grass make him the primary beneficiary if the favorites duel early.

4 - Attfield:

Trained by Thomas Morley, Attfield was a high-quality juvenile who won the Central Park Stakes but has struggled to find his rhythm in 2026. Today, he adds blinkers for the first time, a move designed to sharpen his focus early. If the blinkers provide the intended "wake-up" call, his back class suggests he can blow past this field at a nice price.

Betting Strategy

Trifecta: 5, 6 / 4, 5, 6 / 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Race 10 - Dinner Party Stakes (Grade III)

Post Time: 4:11pm ET

1 1/8 Miles

Turf

\$250,000

Three Year Olds And Upward

6 - Dresden Row:

After a prolific career on synthetic at Woodbine, his recent turf transition was spectacular, defeating Grade 1-placed Integration in a Keeneland allowance with a 98 Equibase Rating. With Flavien Prat aboard, he possesses the elite tactical speed to move first on the leaders.

Top Three Selections

3 - Cruise The Nile:

Graham Motion has this Cairo Prince gelding in peak form, most recently winning the Henry Clark Stakes over this surface. His versatility—winning from the lead or stalking—makes him the most reliable contender to hit the board.

4 - Fort Washington:

The backclass specialist and defending champion. While his 2026 form has been inconsistent, Shug McGaughey reports he is training "professionally" with a sharp :48.10 half-mile at Belmont. As a son of War Front, the 1 1/8-mile distance is his absolute sweet spot for a late-stretch surge.

Betting Strategy

Exacta: 6 / 3, 4, 5

Trifecta: 6 / 3, 4 / 1, 3, 4, 5, 7

Preakness 2026 Saturday Stakes Selections

Race 11 - Gallorette Stakes (Grade III)

Post Time: 4:53pm ET

1 1/16 Miles

Turf

\$150,000

Fillies And Mares, Three Year Olds And Upward

7 - Child Of The Moon:

Trained by Chad Brown and ridden by Irad Ortiz Jr., this French-bred mare fits the classic Laurel turf profile: a patient closer with a devastating turn of foot. Her recent speed figures are the most consistent in the field, and her ability to navigate traffic makes her the most likely winner in a crowded field.

Top Three Selections

3 - Accent:

Brown's upside entry with Flavien Prat. While making her graded stakes debut, she is an efficient 3-for-4 lifetime. Analytics highlight her exceptional Late Pace ratings, and the move to the Mid-Atlantic circuit often results in a speed figure boost for Brown shippers. She is the primary threat to her stablemate if she gets the jump at the quarter-pole.

4 - Warming:

Ridden by John Velazquez, Warming notched a Grade 3 win in the Autumn Miss at Santa Anita last fall. While the odds suggest she is a tier below the Brown favorites, her high-end tactical speed provide massive overlay value at double-digit odds.

Betting Strategy

Exacta: 7 / 2, 3, 4, 5, 8

Trifecta: 3, 7 / 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 / 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8

Race 12 - Jim McKay Turf Sprint Stakes

Post Time: 3:54pm ET

1 Mile

Turf

\$125,000

Fillies, Three Years Old

3 - Jean Valjean:

After a long layoff, he returned to lead the field deep into the stretch in the Leatherbury before tiring. His subsequent May 1st romp at Laurel proved he is back to peak fitness. Analytics suggest he is the fastest horse in the field for the first three furlongs.

Top Three Selections

4 - Chasing Liberty:

The most consistent performer in the lineup. He was narrowly denied by #8 Outlaw Kid last time out, but gains the services of Irad Ortiz Jr., a master at timing turf sprint charges. His speed figures are the most reliable in the field, and he possesses the tactical versatility to sit just off the leaders.

7 - Isivunguvungu:

This is the wiseguy play of the race. A champion in South Africa, he makes his first U.S. start for the Graham Motion barn. His international Grade 1 form is superior to this field, and his recent "uphill" works at Fair Hill suggest he is ready to fire. At double-digit odds, he offers massive analytical value.

Betting Strategy

Exacta: 3, 4 / 3, 4, 7, 8, 11

Trifecta: 3, 4 / 3, 4, 7, 8 / 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 11