

GOLDEN GATE ANALYSIS

By **CHUCK DYBDAL**



BEST BET: Island of Zen (1st race)

First Race: 1. Island of Zen 2. Moon Stone Madness 3. Profound Elegance

With four last-out winners plus two other runners that hit the board, this looms a contentious hear. ISLAND OF ZEN ran second at this level last out and has good speed. Odds-on pick was passed late in a good event at this level. Should be a big factor again in this spot. MOON STONE MADNESS really put things together last time in her third career start. Comes back after a month and has worked nicely to maintain her sharpness in the interim. PROFOUND ELEGANCE didn't light up the timer, but she ran very professionally in winning her debut. Has a nice work since and believe there's room for a lot more improvement in her.

Second Race: 1. Super Salesman 2. Old College Try 3. Memo to Rose

SUPER SALESMAN was a beaten favorite when he hung late last time after making a good move into the lane. Willing to give him another look, and getting a seven-pound weight break won't hurt either. Seems improved of late and did work nicely since his last start. OLD COLLEGE TRY has been a pace factor in his past two starts. He's faded a bit sprinting but is bred to appreciate two turns and will be a factor if he's willing to relax early. MEMO TO ROSE made a big close to nip the top pick as he made his second career start. Stretching out to a mile off two sprints, and his late-running style suggests he'll like the added distance.

Third Race: 1. Lookn for the Lord 2. Witzel Dixie 3. Taxi Fleet

LOOKN FOR THE LORD has never missed a check at this level where he has also recorded his past two wins. Shown improvement his past two starts after being re-claimed for this tag. Barn knows him well and has given him a nice maintenance work since raced. WITZEL DIXIE drops down and runs for a tag for the first time here. Has run all right of late and has a pair of bullet works since his last start. High-percentage barn is good off similar lay-offs. TAXI FLEET dropped to this level for his first start in almost 11 months. It was his first Nocal start, and he lost by less than one length. Has two works since and won't have to improve much to be in the thick of things here.

Fourth Race: 1. Starcast 2. Thecatchcheckraised 3. Sanfran

STARCAST drops and adds blinkers for this. Running at the lowest level of his career. He's better on turf but has won over the Tapeta. Will sit back and save ground along the rail before making his move in the lane. THE-CATCHECKRAISED ran third at this level two back. Met better last time, setting the pace before fading a bit late while going longer. Has career record of 1-for-26, but he's a nibbler that has hit the board 10 other times. SANFRAN gets a double step up the ladder after a game win last time. Versatile sort is comfortable on any surface, but it's been a long time since he's run at this high a claiming level.

Fifth Race: 1. J's Stormtracker 2. Solo Flash 3. Alwayswise

J'S STORMTRACKER returns to the bottom level after running third against better in his past two starts. Has enough speed to maintain a good stalking position early and should be a factor in the lane. Could be tough to catch by this bottom-level group. SOLO FLASH has earned a check in every start and has shown an ability to finish in his sprints. Sat back when he made a route start last time and finished well there as well. Moving to new barn but retains rider, who got to know him last time. ALWAYSWISE has hit the board in his past three starts. Regressed a bit last time but has come back with two good works since then. Has hit board in five of his seven starts here.

Sixth Race: 1. Black Gulch 2. De Brief Me 3. Nautical Rule

BLACK GULCH gets a questionable drop here from a barn that plays racetrack poker with the best of them. Ran only once last year, losing a photo in a \$12,500 claimer. He came back after nearly a year on the sidelines for that price and ran third after sitting close the whole way. Dropping to the bottom level now but has two decent maintenance drills since his comeback. The question to answer: why the drop? DE BRIEF ME has earned checks in both starts at this bottom level after graduating at the bottom level. Got away slowly last time and was far back but made a big sweeping move on the turn to get up for second. NAUTICAL RULE got passed in the final stride by the second choice last time. He'll be sitting in good position early and looms a legitimate contender.

Seventh Race: 1. Ippon 2. Preach the Gospel 3. Mahmoud Memory

IPPON has hit the board in both starts since dropping to this bottom level. Will appreciate shortening up just a bit here. Has speed and will benefit from the outside post here. Hails from a sharp barn and has an easy maintenance drill since raced. PREACH THE GOSPEL showed improvement in her second start and now drops to the bottom level in a bid to earn a diploma. Flashed more speed last time and figures to be a pace factor here. MAHMOUD MEMORY comes off an even effort. Draws the rail, which could be a mixed blessing. Doesn't have keen speed but is capable of stalking. If some of the firsters drawn outside her flash speed, she could get shuffled back.

Eighth Race: 1. Roman Lady 2. Young Paris 3. Trapper's Bounty

ROMAN LADY is a half sister to millionaire Bold Chieftain. Her winning debut was more visually impressive than the final time and number she earned. Was last early as she got a confident ride and always looked a winner as she bagen her move on the turn. Will likely be better when she stretches out, but she has a strong bullet work since her debut win. YOUNG PARIS is unbeaten sprinting. She ran third in the California Oaks and was second routing last time. She's willing to sit a bit when she sprints and exhibits a great closing kick. TRAPPER'S BOUNTY is a stablemate of the top pick. She, too, won her debut and set the pace before fading last time. She matched the top pick as they were the best of 73 workers going five furlongs on Sunday.

Ninth Race: 1. Bold Prospector 2. Rob the Moment 3. Class Mate

BOLD PROSPECTOR has earned checks in both starts at this level. He faded going longer two back after taking the lead in the lane. He ran second when favored last time. Figures to get a good stalking trip with the leading rider in the saddle. ROB THE MOMENT chased the top pick last time after edging him in their previous start. Makes his third start after a brief freshener. Has a pair of easy maintenance drills since raced and will be able to save ground with his inside draw. CLASS MATE comes out of the same race as the top pair. He was making up a bit of ground late but was never really a threat. Chased the top two in his start two back as well.