

JIM BANNON'S JOURNAL

RACE #1

BANNON

1. VAGE (BEST)
2. HUCKLEBERRY'S GAL
3. SHOOT TO THRILL

ABERNATHY

1. VAGE
2. SHOOT TO THRILL
3. HUCKLEBERRY'S GAL

LUCKIERTHANYOUTHINK was lost in July for \$40,000 in peak form and was reclaimed for just \$10,000 November 18th when performing poorly; she has had an opportunity for an interim prep. **GLADIATORS CONSORT** had peak efforts in her previous two events which included a maiden win and a close up finish against non-winners of two; most recently, she encountered a pace structure that was too difficult yet she did contribute to the quick middle fractions before fading.

SHOOT TO THRILL won a race two starts ago for \$10,000 that was loaded with dropped down runners; the third place finisher has come back to win; most recently, she was overmatched finishing third at this price as the top two were dominant speed runners; the pace was considerably quicker than usual for that classification; she loves the mud.

HUCKLEBERRY'S GAL took time off following a claim October 17th and returned November 24th to win for \$12,500; Fraser patiently settled her far off the pace and then a final quarter in 27.4 was her ticket to a winning rally by two and a half lengths.

ALL ABOUT COLOR was aggressively positioned by Sid Attard to win a race for \$10,000 against non-winners of three December 3rd; she rated early and used her big edge on the turn and opened up in the lane and then was weakening late but secured the victory; she looks to win her fourth race of the season.

VAGE looks strong in this race because she has such good middle pace potential and she can still run on through the stretch; for \$32,000 last time she was a solid second behind a repeating winner.

INSPIRED MAGIC is a two time winner this season and had a peak race as recently as two starts ago when claimed; she disappointed as the favourite for \$16,000 last time.

RACE #2

BANNON

1. FABULOUS FAKER
2. SOUTH PAW
3. FANTINO

ABERNATHY

1. FABULOUS FAKER(MP)
2. KID RED
3. ALPHA KING

JOLIE BEN FABIE like all the rest of these, was entered for Saturday in an event that was cancelled; he has a more challenging post here on the redraw; he has been competing against Ontario sire runners and now falls on to the open market.

FABULOUS FAKER improved rapidly second time out October 22nd; he was an aggressive part of the pace and streaked away at the end; a couple behind him, High Volt Jolt and Give Faith, have since come back to win nice races; most recently November 13th, he bounced; he resurfaces now for \$40,000 to face non winners of two with the blinkers on.

KID RED gets a better post here than he had originally on Saturday when this exact event was cancelled and carried over; he has had many of the best trainers this year and is now under the care of Sid Attard for the first time; he showed signs of being revitalized in his latest; he gets to run cheaper than ever before, in now for \$40,000 against non winners of two.

ALPHA KING is attempting a comeback; he was dropped into this price range last time and offered early speed against Fantino but stopped; he has since worked in 1.01.4.

SOUTH PAW needed a drop in value to get his confidence up November 25th; he was able to streak away inside and draw off by 3 ½ lengths under McAleney; he doubles in value.

MISTER E. K. is getting his first start since the spring at Churchill Downs when he was off form; he does indicate local preps for new trainer Mark Casse; his lone lifetime win came at a route in January with front end speed; following the cancellation of his race on Saturday, he worked Sunday morning in 1.02.1.

FANTINO has run two peak races in a row; two starts ago, he lost the lead late at seven furlongs but did manage to keep the tough Skipacruise in third; most recently, he was part of a hectic pace battle and once again, he lost out in the last crucial yards; he remains a viable pace factor.

RACE #3

BANNON

1. POLAR SPARKEL
2. DIXIE SOUP
3. RESTLESS HALO

ABERNATHY

1. POLAR SPARKEL
2. SOSELLA
3. RESTLESS HALO

SOSELLA returned from a long layoff November 20th and showed little; she does have the benefits of a comeback work in 49.4.

POLAR SPARKEL looks like a strong threat here; she was third in her latest under optional terms when going this distance in the mud; she stalked the pace and stayed on willingly to be third; the fourth place finisher, Wishbone Kid, won an Ontario sire maiden event on Sunday while the fifth place finisher from that last event has since come back to be second in that same race; the blinkers are on.

PERFECT ACTION failed to threaten November 28th but did close willingly relative to the pace advancing from sixth to be fourth against a surprise winner, Valentine's Mist, who was in the entries for Thursday.

DIXIE SOUP is worth considering; one can toss out her latest against the boys in a protected spot; she is in for just \$20,000 on this huge drop for this late season attempt; she gets in against the girls.

BELLATIA went from a sprint to a route second time out November 28th and grabbed the early lead but stopped in the latter furlongs.

WILD WITCH will have to prove herself at the distance; she returned from an extended layoff December 2nd and showed little in a sprint.

RAVEN'S END was set to compete last Saturday but her event was cancelled; she goes here instead at a higher price and a longer distance.

RESTLESS HALO had a fine performance on turf two starts ago to be on the edges in the same race where Dixie Soup was second; most recently, in a main track race for \$32,000, she weakened late; she takes a double level drop here.

AFFLICT was scheduled to start Saturday but that event was cancelled and she will go here instead at this longer distance at one level higher in search of her first share.

TENET is a possible wake up runner if she can handle the stretch out in distance; she indicated little when overmatched sprinting December 4th when returning from a layoff.

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RACE #4

BANNON

- 1. BOLD GRENADIER**
- 2. HURRY HARD**
- 3. TIGER CLAW**

ABERNATHY

- 1. ONE FOR CARMEN**
- 2. TIGER CLAW**
- 3. HURRY HARD**

BOLD GRENADIER was scheduled to compete Saturday in a race that was cancelled and had a better post at that time; he is a homebred, and a son of Bold Executive and from the same dam that produced Wicksy, who won early for Scott Fairlie; he worked quickly for speed October 17th in 34.3; he prepped December 5th in 37.3.

MY SURVIVOR a homebred, debuts for trainer Mike DePaulo; he is by Kiridashi and from a dam that thrived as a juvenile who produced the juvenile winner, Mom's Star; he had a quick work November 13th in 36.1

HURRY HARD an auction buy, is debuting for trainer Robert Tiller; he is a son of Bold Executive and Tiller has done well with a daughter of Bold Executive this year, Simply Lovely who is a contender for top Juvenile filly; he put up a fast time in a gate work on the training track November 24th in 1.00.4hg getting ready.

ONE FOR CARMEN an auction buy, debuts for trainer Laurie Silvera; he is a son of Highland Ruckus and a half brother to the stakes placed juvenile Estrada; he indicated sharpness in a gate work November 21st in 49.4bg to beat company.

MASTER CHRIS a first time starter, is a homebred for the Terra Racing Stable; he is by Bold N' Flashy and from a dam that won as a juvenile; trainer John Ross has had him going quickly on the training track; he had a move November 16th in 1.00.2 and also that morning, Ross worked his stakes placed juvenile, Out From Africa in an identical clocking; he had the difficult rail post when this event was originally carded for Saturday and gets a better draw here.

KRZ DEED a homebred, goes for trainer Mike DePaulo; he is a newcomer to this group which was carried over from Saturday; he has a recognizable pedigree as a half brother to million dollar sprinter Krz Ruckus; as imagined, his training track works have been quick including a rapid gate work December 6th in 49.2hg.

BLIND RIVER FOX came close to winning off the shelf November 21st when he ran by far his best race; he embarked on a speed mission but was joined in the stretch and lost a tough photo and it was a big gap back to the third place finisher.

TIGER CLAW debuted November 24th under tough terms at six furlongs in the slop in a maiden event under optional terms; he was the leader into the stretch but was displaced and finished third; the winner was well regarded; he now comes in against Ontario sire runners.

DOCTOR RON a homebred for the R.M.C. Stable, is by Highland Ruckus and from a dam that has produced eight winners; he goes in this opener for trainer Cliff Hopmans; he has had three consecutive works at five furlongs.

HANDLEBAR HANK was in this classification at six furlongs last time and went quickly with a half in 45.3 but faded to be fourth; he once again looks like a speed component.

SIR GREGORY debuted November 17th but fell back early and then tried to reach contention but was finally unable to keep up.

RACE #5

BANNON

- 1. ROYAL ATTRACTION**
- 2. MINDEN HILLS**
- 3. EXECUTIVE ATTITUDE**

ABERNATHY

- 1. ROYAL ATTRACTION**
- 2. DIAMON SU**
- 3. EXECUTIVE ATTITUDE**

STARLET APPROVAL was a maiden breaker two starts ago for \$18,000 at this distance; most recently in the mud for \$18,000 she had perfect positioning under rating tactics but then lacked any finish.

CALEDONNA doesn't look to be quick enough in her current form after losses in double digits; she took her only win of this season at Fort Erie.

STUCK IN LIMBO was in the paddock and ready to compete last Saturday when the races were called off; she seeks her first win of the year in this her 14th start.

DIAMON SU is without a win in 11 trips this season but closed smartly last time from the outside to be a tight third with Lady Archer in second and Numerous Lady in fourth.

MINDEN HILLS has had a busy schedule and this will be her fifth race since November 3rd; she is still producing at a good level judging by her latest where she was coming on through the stretch but the winner, Wooden Ships, was predictably better and was back in the entries for Thursday; she stretches to a route.

CANADIAN STAR is going from a series of sprints to a route in hopes of a wake up after consecutive out of the money finishes.

STEP ASIDE PLEASE is a closing type who has been falling too far out of contention in the early and middle stages lately.

MOLINARO FIRST LAS will need to prove herself at the distance; a stretch out attempt in August saw her make a strong middle move but she couldn't supply an adequate finish; she was second at seven furlongs two starts ago at this price.

NUMEROUS LADY had a troubled beginning November 25th; she stalked the pace in traffic and then made a move to get a narrow lead in the stretch but was finally edged with Lady Archer just in front of her in second and Diamon Su in third; she deserves another chance.

ROYAL ATTRACTION looks to be a strong player in this race; she used good middle speed last time to build an advantage but she was overtaken in the lane by a dropped down winner and finished second; she plummets in for just \$10,000.

PROPER MANNERS was able to win second time off the shelf November 17th providing a smart outside rally in a race where blinkers were put on; following that maiden score, she stretches to a route; Dos Ramos was aboard for a comeback work in 49.4.

DASHFORTHROSES is getting a distance test here; an earlier stretch out attempt did not work; most recently she took a big drop for \$10,500 and finished on the edges when closing belatedly.

EXECUTIVE ATTITUDE deserves a second look; her latest for \$20,000 against non-winners of two when dropped down was a fine effort as she finished second; the winner, Springledge, was in the entries for \$20,000 for Thursday; she drops for just \$10,000.

LADY ARCHER has run three consecutive good races with Fraser aboard; she was second for \$9,000 last time as she dashed inside and missed narrowly but did keep Diamon Su in second and Numerous Lady in fourth.

KARLIQUE was in the paddock and ready to compete Saturday when the races were cancelled; she seeks her first win of the year; this is her first start since August.

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RACE #6

BANNON

- 1. WHISKEY SEZ**
- 2. WILLIE DUNN**
- 3. CARGO SHIP**

ABERNATHY

- 1. STRAVINSKY'S HONOR**
- 2. WHISKEY SEZ**
- 3. WILLIE DUNN**

WHISKEY SEZ is in prime form right now; in this classification in slop November 28th, he fell much farther off the pace than usual; however, he streaked along the inside to be second behind a repeating winner.

CARGO SHIP is a welcomed visitor from Finger Lakes who won off the shelf there November 19th; trainer Michael Lecesse shipped in S. Cheery Legacy to upset here on Saturday.

WILLIE DUNN had good fortune to win a couple of Ontario sire races late in the summer; most recently, in the slop, in this classification, he weakened late with Whiskey Sez in third.

GENERAL KIRIDASHI was against Ontario sire runners at the first allowance level last time; he tried hard from a speed point of view but weakened to finish on the edges.

CUNNINGLY was able to steal a race with a drop down November 6th; it was a speed biased surface and she scampered away at prohibitively low odds; she goes off the claim for Abraham Katryan in a much tougher spot here.

STRAVINSKY'S HONOR has now won two in a row for trainer Ross Armata Jr.; he was beautifully positioned October 3rd to win for \$32,000; the stable often does well with runners coming off the shelf; he put up a fast work November 30th in 1.01.3; he takes a big jump in class.

SID DITHERS was claimed just recently December 3rd for a minor sum when disappointing at a longer distance.

CLOUD JUMPER has been a fringe performer for much of this season; he gets his first start since November 13th when a disappointing sixth.

JADE MOUNTAIN is a maiden in good form currently tackling winners at the first allowance classification.

RACE #7

BANNON

- 1. COPPER TOPPER**
- 2. CASE WORKER**
- 3. DIAMOND HARD CUT**

ABERNATHY

- 1. CASE WORKER**
- 2. PADISHAH**
- 3. CARABINEER**

I'M A KIPPER had a less than ideal journey last time when able to show good attending speed but not enough power in the lane; he has been freshened for over a month.

QUITMAN was scheduled to start November 14th but was a belated scratch; he is bred for speed and had two bullet works on the training track in late October and early November.

MONTISI was scheduled to compete Saturday but his event was cancelled; he is a homebred by Archers Bay going for Andrew Smith; he had a quick work on the training track November 8th in 1.02.4.

DIAMOND HARD CUT performed poorly for the second race in a row October 16th; he was given a freshener and returned with front bandages November 21st at a reduced evaluation; he had a much keener approach in that event to run a sharp third against a first time starter.

CARABINEER has run two adequate fringe races; most recently for \$40,000 he was in tough against a first time starter; two starts ago he was on the edges with Case Worker second.

PADISHAH was a close second two starts ago for \$40,000 at five furlongs; a subsequent race was a bit of a letdown; he encountered a much faster pace and chased but weakened late.

SMALL PARCEL GUY angled to the outside for a stretch drive November 26th and came on to be fourth with Carabineer three lengths better in third; he drops a level.

PACE LIKE FIRE was scheduled to compete December 4th but that event was cancelled and he will go here instead; he drops from his dull opener to go for \$28,000.

COPPER TOPPER a homebred first time starter, goes for Mark Casse; he is by Old Topper who was a Stakes winner as a juvenile and he has had fine local representation with his juveniles for this stable; he had steady prepping through November getting ready for this opener and Husbands has the call.

CABLE VISION failed to keep up under tough terms in the slop last time in an optional event and was protected; he now falls onto the open market and below his claimed price.

SEE JACK RUN made a middle move last time but couldn't sustain it in a failed route experiment; he cuts back in distance.

MOLINARO NATIVE finished tenth in his debut in the same race where Padishah was a vastly better second; he brought a different look to his second start with a race on the lead against much faster fractions; he was beaten out quite late in a sharp try; he was on the tougher footing inside on that occasion.

CASE WORKER attracted a claim November 7th for \$28,000 when a sharp second; a comeback race came in the tough Sunny's Halo Stakes where he made a lovely outside approach at the top of the stretch as a first time lasix user; however, he slipped back in the lane; he drops sharply back to the level for which he was claimed.

NIGHT ORCHID was behind in the early going December 1st and was overwhelmed in that event finishing a distant tenth; he drops in for \$32,000.

RACE #8

BANNON

- 1. JEEPIS MISSED**
- 2. GANGSTER**
- 3. PICADILLY BAY**

ABERNATHY

- 1. MULLIGAN THE GREAT**
- 2. GANGSTER**
- 3. ADJALAH**

JUDITHS WILD RUSH will try a sprint for the first time since April; he was locked in a tough speed duel last time with the eventual runner-up Sky Diamond and folded; he is in for \$62,500.

OPEN CONCERT usually commits to route races but after some fringe efforts he will shorten to a sprint; his last sprint effort was a fine race as he lost narrowly after a good pace contribution.

WHISPERED WARNING is getting his first start since the autumn of 2002 and he was fourth in an added money race; he has worked over short distances.

PANTS N KISSES attracted a claim for just \$20,000 October 17th; trainer Jody Hammett brought him off the shelf at an elevated level November 17th and he ran a career peak scoring by six lengths for \$35,000; the fourth place finisher Tiger Shrimp has come back to win for \$35,000; he goes the other way, jumping now to the second allowance level.

JEEPIS MISSED has run some strong races the past while and looks to be a factor once again; most recently for straight claiming \$50,000 at seven furlongs, he was surging at the leader but didn't quite get that one and then was passed by the winner.

ADJALAH had a peak race two starts ago at six furlongs and the third place finisher has come back with a lovely win; he bounced in his latest when the dynamics did not set up properly for him.

PICADILLY BAY gets back to sprinting for the first time since the spring when he was unbeaten in a couple of one turn races; he has been freshened since September 30th and he had a sharp blow out December 2nd in 35.3; he loves the mud.

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RODEO FUN posted his first win of the year November 18th; he was going first time off the claim for Warren Wilcox and was perfectly handled by Slade Callaghan; the fourth place finisher has come back to win.

GANGSTER looks strong in this race; he was in this classification at seven furlongs last time and followed the pace and moved as if he would win then was repelled by another who was running strongly in the stretch.

MULLIGAN THE GREAT is the question mark here as he gets his first start since July 1st when he disappointed at Fort Erie; he has been searching for an appropriate spot; he worked November 27th in 46.4; he is a multiple Stakes winner.

SOUVENIER BIZ ran in this category last time; he had first run at the lead at the top of the stretch but was bumped and then faded to be fourth with Adjalah the winner; he has since trained well.

RACE #9

BANNON

1. SPARKMAN
2. BOLD TRADER
3. STING MAN

ABERNATHY

1. SPARKMAN
2. MULTI DEED
3. HE RULES

BOLD TRADER is in good form at the moment; he took a sharp third place finish two starts ago; most recently he was best but was judged guilty of changing paths on a windy day and was demoted.

CAT STRIKER was claimed from a sharp race two starts ago for \$20,000; he finished 34 lengths behind the dominant winner Pants N Kisses last time; he drops to the price for which he was claimed.

CORPORAL COBRA has done his best running at six furlongs and won at that distance two starts ago but was unplaced at seven furlongs last time.

SPARKMAN looks to be a contender; two starts ago when winning, he beat Cabriolass who was Stakes placed on Wednesday; most recently he was third as he hung late against a tough winner at two prices higher than this.

STING MAN ran a courageous race for \$18,000 November 12th; he embarked on a strong middle pace mission and the winner had to be very good to take him down in the stretch; he shortens up.

BLUEFINGER won the finale on Sunday and was claimed and is back for a late season run with a cut back to six furlongs; he will attempt to concentrate his late power.

COUSIN WOODY doesn't look to be quick enough in his current form; he was on the edges for \$10,500 last time.

GO NORTH was claimed for \$40,000 in September and now drops in for \$20,000; he floundered in the slop last time against key opponents; the winner has since been second for \$50,000 and the third place finisher Rodeo Fun has since won and is in race eight.

RUNNING AWAY was on the edges two starts ago for just \$10,500 and faces tough opponents here.

REINVIGORATE ran so willing in his previous two events that dropping in for \$10,000 last time made him the even money favourite; he finished only second while running against the bias; he goes off the claim for Sandra Dominguez with blinkers.

DEFRENCH broke in the air two starts ago; most recently he was overwhelmed by the very good Pants N Kisses; he seeks relief with the big drop; he has a chance on his best.

MULTI DEED hit the edges last time for \$20,000 as he continued inside to get just a minor share against a tough winner.

HE RULES lacked any early or middle speed December 5th and had too much to do in the stretch for \$20,000 against non-winners of two; he was finally fourth with an inside rally.

ALKABAN is a first time starter here against winners; he has plenty of stamina in his pedigree.

RACE #10

BANNON

1. SHORT SQUEEZE
2. PLATINUM SCORE
3. KINGS AND QUINNS

ABERNATHY

1. SHORT SQUEEZE
2. QUESTING KNIGHT
3. KRIS'S DANCER

SUPREME JUDGE ran willingly for \$9,000 last time when going second time off the shelf; he was outside and only three lengths behind Platinum Score.

ELEGANT HUNTER ruined his chances with a poor departure from the gate November 28th when coming off the shelf; that opens the door for a big drop here; he hopes to recapture some of his good form from the summertime.

PLATINUM SCORE has now won two in a row under good handling from Baird; he was precise with his rally for \$10,000 last time; Kabel takes over.

ONLY FOOLS RUSH IN was allowed to scratch from a race December 1st and ended up in an appropriate spot one day later winning for \$7,500 under good handling by Sutherland for Vito Armata.

B.C. WEST was running from off the pace and against the bias when trying to chase Only Fools Rush In last time and he was third; two starts ago in a route, he ran a fine race to be third against Short Squeeze.

MERKABAN typically has offered speed in recent races but not enough finishing power.

KINGS AND QUINNS reached back for some of his previous class when he came off the shelf to win November 21st for \$14,000; he was beautifully prepared by Rita Schnitzler; he stretches out.

GABBY LOU set too quick a pace last time for \$16,000 and stopped; he was facing several of these.

KRIS'S DANCER angled to the outside November 27th in a race against some of these and came on to be fourth with Short Squeeze the runner-up.

QUESTING KNIGHT competed against some of these last time and was not far away as he provided an inside rally and galloped out well.

SHORT SQUEEZE was handled with precision to win two starts ago at this price range; most recently he was much farther off the pace and ran out of ground when a tight second.

LUCKY TEC competed at seven furlongs last time and was a tight third against Kings And Quinns when on the toughest footing down on the rail.

RED VINTAGE had the slow pace in his favour December 3rd going first time off the claim for \$12,500 but he missed narrowly at seven furlongs.

LET HIM RIP has picked the inside in his last two events; he was second best two starts ago against Short Squeeze; most recently he finished just behind that one when third.

DEVILS RIGHT HAND was beautifully handled by Bahen December 3rd; he benefitted from a front running bias angling from the outside post to hug the rail in front for the upset at this price and distance.