



"NICK'S PICKS"

PREAKNESS WEEKEND SELECTIONS

CAN'T JUSTIFY MY PREAKNESS

Pardon me if I try to find a way to not Justify my Preakness pick. So many others will. Out of either stubbornness, denial or disbelief, I'm staying on my Kentucky Derby selection and back Good Magic in the Preakness.

Kentucky Derby winner Justify comes into the Preakness undefeated, impressive, popular and worthy of his 1-2 morning line favoritism. His Spring has been worthy of the accolades going beyond well. He's been taken with perfect starts under perfect rides to perfect results.

Anyone that plays Justify shouldn't expect to see more than \$3.00 on win. At post time, it's safe to say he will be exceptionally lower. Justify may reach favoritism at the level of Big Brown (2008) who was 1-9 at Preakness post time. Even Triple Crown winner American Pharoah was more than 4-5 in the Preakness.

In recent years, the wagering public has had no problem sending the Kentucky Derby winner off most popular. The last Kentucky Derby winner that wasn't favored in the Preakness wound up duping handicappers. In 2012, I'll Have Another (3-1) was the second choice behind Bodemeister (8-5) and prevailed. In 2009, longshot 50-1 Kentucky Derby winner Mine That Bird was the third choice yet finished only a length behind Rachel Alexander.

There is a recent case of the Kentucky Derby runner up avenging a Louisville setback in Baltimore when Exaggerator, on a sloppy track, took the Preakness in 2016 ahead of Nyquist. That's the only recent history on my side in taking Good Magic.

While the favorite has won the Kentucky Derby in the last six editions, the Preakness hasn't been so predictable. Two exceptional horses, American Pharoah (2015) and California Chrome (2014) have won the Preakness as favorites in back to back years ending a drought that went back to Big Brown. That's 20% in the last decade.

Is Justify lucky or does he make his own luck. It could be both. The big chestnut has a large presence that almost appears to intimate those that attempt to run alongside him. If he's the first to cross the wire the first time, he'll be the first crossing the wire the second and final time. Good Magic may not have that large presence but has displayed better tactical maneuvering. Justified has never been worse than second in any point of call. Good Magic has won from being fifth.

Good Magic may have one real edge over Justify that's attractive to me.....a little price.

BLACK-EYED SUSAN - FRIDAY, MAY 18**RACE 1**

6	DJS FAVORITE	Tempting 1st "Timers" here but Rice infuses "Special K" to NY shipper.
2	HOLIDAY TIME	
3	TIMELESS CURL	

RACE 2

3	LAST PROMISE KEPT	Proctor filly performs on all conditions, just recently a bit outclassed.
5	LADIES PRIVILEGE	
6	CANNY	

RACE 3

3	SOWER	Two here won in their first start by 7+ on the front end. Speed a factor here.
9	RUMOR RIDGE	
4	ZORALLY	

RACE 4

5	STYLE ICON	Would like less "Style" and more form, a bit less drama means win.
7	ANNE DUPREE	
3	DIG DEEPER	

RACE 5 - THE \$100,000 SKIPAT

4	MS LOCUST POINT	Servis filly back to 6 furlongs & out of graded stakes. Won 4 of last 5.
1	CAIRENN	
3	STARTWITHSILVER	

7	SHOE LOVES SHOE	Deep turf sprint field has "Shoe", now proven to win on various surfaces.
11	CLEVER TRIAD	
13	VERSED	

RACE 7 - THE \$150,000 MISS PREAKNESS (G3)

9	GOOD MOVE	Not much separates top three options here. "Move" maybe a bit more hungry.
1	HAPPY LIKE A FOOL	
6	LEZENDARY	

RACE 8

6	DOUGLAS ROAD	Two standout here from Beyers ratings yet both making 1st 2018 starts.
2	HOLIDAY BONUS	
13	ROYAL CRUSADER	

RACE 9 - THE \$300,000 PIMLICO SPECIAL (G3)

8	SOMETHING AWESOME	It's "Awesome" how many ways Corrales' 7-year old finds ways to win.
5	HEDGE FUND	
1	IRISH WAR CRY	

RACE 10 - THE \$100,000 JIM MCKAY TURF SPRINT

7	HOGY	Maker returns Hogy to sprint, a distance proven on other courses.
4	OAK BLUFFS	
3	IMPRIMIS	

RACE 11 - THE \$250,000 BLACK-EYED SUSAN (G2)

2	MIDNIGHT DISGUISE	The winner comes from the Gazelle, but which one? Midnight blinkers.
9	SARA STREET	
7	GOODONEHONEY	

RACE 12 - THE \$100,000 HILLTOP

8	THEWAYIAM	Motion filly a real standout and capable on any turf condition. Too obvious?
5	FAIRY LINK	
4	JEHOZACAT	

RACE 13 - THE \$150,000 ALLAIRE DUPONT DISTAFF (G3)

7	BLUE PRIZE	Choices here know each other very well. Another possible Ortiz exacta.
6	VERVE'S TALE	
1	FUHRIOUSLY KISSED	

RACE 14

6	MAGICAL	Magical best of 6 entered that won their last start. Eagle Point liked turf.
6	ELECTRIC	
2	WHAT THE BEEP	

PREAKNESS - SATURDAY, MAY 19**RACE 1**

1	AUTOGRADE	A race condition where a long race resume doesn't work best.
4	FLASH ATTACK	
7	HILL SHADOW	

RACE 2

5	AQUAMARINE	Safe to say that the late April race at Laurel is a key race in this field.
9	SHE DOESN'T MIND	
4	OH MY	

RACE 3

7	FORGE	Nice for Forge to bounce win off a big effort, yet 6 of 8 come here after a win.
8	POP KEENAN	
6	HAPPY FARM	

RACE 4

12	DO THAT DANCE	Should if stay on the grass, "Dothat's" history show soft going success.
6	BIG BELLA BROWN	
5	SQUARE SHOOTER	

RACE 5 - THE \$100,000 JAMES MURPHY

4	BLACK STETSON	4 here cross-entered in Sir Barton, only "Stetson" focused & proven.
9	COLTANDMISSISSIPPI	
6	SAY THE WORD	

RACE 6

7	UNCLE MOJO	Pletcher sends a steady performer out vs. many that don't match on paper.
3	BO VUK	
6	BELFOUR	

RACE 7 - THE \$250,000 DIXIE (G2)

7	WORLD APPROVAL	"World" proven on off turf & Pimlico. Can't even find fault in his rare setbacks.
1	FIRE AWAY	
6	JUST HOWARD	

RACE 8 - THE \$200,000 CHICK LANG

5	MITOLE	Hard to go against Mitole other than he's finally out of Arkansas.
7	CURLY'S ROCKET	
1	STILL HAVING FUN	

RACE 9 - THE \$150,000 GALLORETTE (G2)

3	ULTRA BRAT	Cambodia won this race last year in the rain, "Brat" has one this year.
8	ELYSEA'S WORD	
5	CAMBODIA	

RACE 10 - THE \$150,000 MARYLAND SPRINT (G3)

9	LONG HAUL BAY	"Bay" not as proven as "Swiss" esp. if wet, but coming into race well.
5	SWITZERLAND	
8	FELLOWSHIP	

RACE 11 - THE \$100,000 VERY ONE

11	SMILING CAUSEWAY	Audley's "Smiling" cause he's never finished worse than 2nd in 7 starts.
1	CHANTELIN	
12	JUST TALKIN	

RACE 12 - THE \$100,000 SIR BARTON

2	PONY UP	Baffert's "Ax" wins by plenty when he does, but "Pony" can go 1&1/16th.
8	AX MAN	
6	DREAM BABY DREAM	

RACE 13 - PREAKNESS (G1)

5	GOOD MAGIC	One day, Justify won't be on the lead & get dirty. "Magic" handles that.
7	JUSTIFY	
1	QUIP	

RACE 14

5	UGOTTAHAVEHEART	Familiar condition for "Ugotta", now at a different track for a rematch.
3	PHIL'S COCKTAIL	
7	APPEALING FUTURE	