



In Focus

Laurel Park stakes

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THE RACING BIZ 

Laurel Park 
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THREE QUESTIONS

For today's stakes races at Laurel Park, we have three key questions we'll be looking to answer during the day. They are:

- ✓ **How good is Cathryn Sophia?** The Parx shipper was ultra-impressive at first asking, but the water gets deeper here, in the Gin Talking. Will she answer the bell?
- ✓ **In the Marylander, Vorticity? Or Never Gone South?** These two runners both have much to recommend them, and one of them looks likely to get the money here. But which one?
- ✓ **Which Lady Sabelia will show up in the Willa on the Move?** The Lady Sabelia we've seen for most of the last two years wins this race. But the one we've seen in two of her last three starts may not.

GIN TALKING STAKES

THE SCOOP

- ✓ **THE TOP CONTENDERS** -- The prohibitive 1-2 Morning Line favorite is Parx shipper **#6 – Cathryn Sophia** whose lone race was a 12 length romp stopping the timer at 1:11 1/5 for 6 furlongs on Oct. 30th. This MD-bred daughter of Street Boss earned a whopping 99 Brisnet# that day and has since fired two bullet drills in preparation for this event. Her trainer John Servis has won 3 of 7 with his shippers at the current Laurel meet... **#2 – Look Who's Talking (5-1)** is the most experienced two-year-old in this field (4:1-1-1), has never been off-the-board at Laurel, and is the only one to have competed in a graded stakes, finishing 5th by 4 lengths in the 1 1/16th mile G3 Miss Grillo at Belmont on the turf. The top three finishers from that race were entered in the G1 Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf. She was third in her most recent effort against the boys going one mile over a "good" main track in an optional claimer that was originally scheduled for the turf. This daughter of Irish-bred Cape Blanco might find her best strides on turf as this will be her first try on a fast, dirt surface... **#7 – Dare to Be (8-1)** makes her main track debut after

GIN TALKING FACTS

- ✓ Race 5, 2:12 p.m. EST
- ✓ \$100,000 purse
- ✓ 2yo fillies, 7 furlongs
- ✓ 7th running of a race named for 2000 Md-bred horse of the year.

THE PICKS

1. **#3 – Thundering Sky (12-1):** *Ran into a buzzsaw (Lewis Bay) in debut when she was 29-1; look for this maiden to graduate in a \$100k stakes Lasix-free.*
2. **#6 – Cathryn Sophia (1-2):** *Trainer John Servis may have a freak on his hands as jock sat on her like a statue from quarter pole to the wire.*
3. **#2 – Look Who's Talking (5-1):** *Was game in defeat going one mile against males on a "good" Laurel track that bordered "fast."*
4. **#5 – Wait Your Turn (10-1):** *Needs to avoid falling prey to speed duel stretching out an extra furlong; NY shipper gets capable local rider in Pimentel..*

(Thanks to Gary Quill for his handicapping prowess.)

starting her career with 3 consecutive turf sprint efforts at Laurel Park. Breaking her maiden in her third start, she previously lost in a headbob to next out winner *Kala Queen*. She was the bridesmaid in her debut to the #2 in here, *Look Who's Talking*.

- ✓ **LIVE AT A PRICE** - Trainer George Weaver ships in **#3 – Thundering Sky (12-1)** from Belmont after she was clearly second best in her career debut when 29-1, 6 lengths behind *Lewis Bay*. That runner came back to win the G2 Demoiselle at Belmont last weekend. The only maiden among this group, she makes her second start after a series of works over the Belmont training track, the final one the fastest of 68 (4f ft 48 1/5 breezing).
- ✓ **THE REST OF THE GANG** -- From the rail **#1 – Prognosis (8-1)** broke her maiden at Ellis Park traveling 7 furlongs in her second career race, but first on natural dirt. This daughter of Tiznow followed that victory by beating N1X at Keeneland in her most recent outing. Trainer Tim Wooley, whose runners have hit the board in 5 of 8 starts takes over for Ian Wilkes, trying to get this one to the winner's circle for a Hat Trick... **#4 – Mecke's Madalyn (30-1)** has earned the two lowest Brisnet#'s (70 & 78) from winning efforts among her peers in this event. In both starts, going 6 furlongs at Pen then FL, she got away from the gate slowly but staged furious rallies in the stretch to prevail with a strong gallop out. What could make this NY-bred attractive is that the runner-ups in both of her races were next out winners. If she continues to move forward while catching a field loaded with early speed, the additional furlong might allow for a pace meltdown to which she'd be the primary beneficiary... **#5 – Wait Your Turn (10-1)** was a debut winner at Aqueduct just two weeks ago when pretty much ignored, paying \$31.80 to WIN. The victory was also the first for trainer Carol Fisher in her career from 10 starters.

MARYLANDER STAKES

THE SCOOP

- ✓ **THE TOP CONTENDERS** -- Trainer Cathal Lynch will saddle Morning Line favorite **#4 – Never Gone South (7-5)** coming off a game second to an impressive colt (*Awesome Speed*) here on Nov. 14th in the James F. Lewis III Stakes. After his debut win at Parx in June, this son of Munnings won the Strike Your Colors Stakes at Delaware Park. Stretching out to 7 furlongs should be no problem, and his stalking running style fits nicely with a number of foes wanting to be on the early lead... **#2 – Vorticity (8-5)** was third to the aforementioned *Awesome Speed* in both colts' debut, and trainer James Lawrence II shipped him to Aqueduct where he took eight rivals gate-to-wire, earning a 93 Brisnet Speed Figure. The future looks bright for this KY-bred son of Distorted Humor who calls Fair Hill Training Center home... **#7 – Runningfromthefeds (9-2)** has romped in his last two races over a sloppy Hawthorne track since being equipped with blinkers. The IL-bred ships in looking for the natural Hat Trick and will break from the starting gate for the fifth time over the past 72 days. Trainer Leo Rodriguez may not have been able to convince Hawthorne jocks Junior Felix or Chris Emigh to bypass numerous mounts in Chi-town for a chance to win a \$100k race in Maryland, as he will give local rider Alex Canchari a leg up on Saturday.
- ✓ **LIVE AT A PRICE** -- After his debut at Pimlico this spring resulted in a third place finish as the 2-1 Post Time favorite, John Salzman, Jr., trainer of **#6 – Tale of E Dubai (10-1)** suspended his training schedule for 5 months. Upon resuming a morning work tab in October, he then broke his maiden in gate-to-wire fashion here in a “hand ride” getting the final fraction in 12 2/5 as the even money favorite. He’s “live” based on the Nov. 28th 6 furlong bullet work in 1:14 flat breezing.
- ✓ **THE REST OF THE GANG** -- Trainer Emanuel Geralis claimed **#1 – Midnight Lovin (15-1)** for \$30,000 out of his last race, a maiden score at Churchill Downs just 3 weeks ago from high-profile owner Ken Ramsey, who also bred this son of Midnight Lute. No published workouts since is a bit of a concern... **#3 – Professor Zoom (20-1)** was also claimed (for \$50,000) out of his last race, but with less desirable results, “surrendering” by 13 lengths nearly two months ago. Showing just one abysmal work (3f ft :39 flat, 4/4) since that claim,

MARYLANDER FACTS

- ✓ Race 7, 3:07 EST
- ✓ \$100,000 purse
- ✓ 2yo, 7 furlongs
- ✓ 4th running since the race was renewed in 2012 and restricted to juveniles.

THE PICKS

1. **#4 – Never Gone South (7-5):** *Sticking with history, think this guy will make it four consecutive years that the odds on favorite prevails in this event.*
2. **#2 – Vorticity (8-5):** *Carrasco picks up the mount instead of staying on the #6; look for better PT odds than what the M/L shows.*
3. **#6 – Tale of E Dubai (10-1):** *Heavily backed in both starts; whatever the issue may have been in debut, appears to have been resolved during 6½ month layoff*
4. **#7 – Runningfromthefeds (9-2):** *Have to respect connections confidence in their IL-bred colt to ship in for a potential piece of a \$100k purse.*

it's hard to be optimistic about his chances... MD-bred **#5 – Captain Alex (20-1)** was a winner at first asking and continued to progress, placing in the Laurel Futurity and MD Million Nursery, but took a step backwards in most recent outing, a \$50,000 Optional Claimer, never getting involved. He'll be equipped with blinkers for the first time in hopes of regaining the form he flashed in his first three races.

WILLA ON THE MOVE STAKES

THE SCOOP

- ✓ **THE TOP CONTENDERS** -- This event seems to be a must for **#7 – Lady Sabelia (2-5)** (picture below) making her third start in the Willa on the Move stakes in as many years, getting the SHOW purse in 2013 when sent-off as the lukewarm 3-1 favorite. She did not disappoint last year, winning easily as the 6-5 favorite. She should be the favorite for the third consecutive year. After a 5½ month layoff in mid-year, she destroyed six rivals in the \$100,000 Pumpkin Pie Stakes at Belmont on Nov. 1. She boasts a top Brisnet Prime Power number (142.1), nearly 7 points better than her nearest rival... **#6 – Galiana (6-1)** surfaced at Laurel for only the second time in her career, in a \$7,500 starter allowance against the boys two back but failed miserably as the even money favorite, then rebounded against males in the Fabulous Strike at Penn National to grab the SHOW purse at 56-1 odds. Her return to competing against fillies & mares might bring out the back class that's earned her 15 wins from 30 starts... Kieron Magee sends out **#1 – Dulcify (10-1)**, winner of two consecutive races since he claimed this four-year-old out of a \$25kN3L at Parx on Sept. 12th. She's pretty much out of conditions unless the magic man wants to take the risk of losing her when in for a tag. Making her Laurel Park dirt debut, she's a solid performer who could be up for the challenge.
- ✓ **LIVE AT A PRICE –#8 – Lionhearted Lady (12-1)** appears to be a horse for a course, never off the board (6-3-2-1) on Laurel Park's dirt oval. Trainer Ham Smith has this MD-bred filly firing on all cylinders once again after a couple failed attempts on the turf. Her victory in the MD Million Distaff was flattered when third place finisher was a next-out winner. The cutback to 6 furlongs might find her in mid-pack early having to rally in deep stretch into what could be soft fractions.

WILLA ON THE MOVE FACTS

- ✓ Race 9, 4:01 EST
- ✓ \$100,000 purse
- ✓ F&M 3yo and up, 6 furlongs
- ✓ 2 Maryland-bred distaff runners named Willa on the Move both found success, the first winning the 1988 G1 Ashland and the second the 2003 G3 Honorable Miss.

THE PICKS

1. **#7 – Lady Sebalia (2-5):** *Hard to look past her after that 1st race after layoff romp at Belmont versus similar, if not better, earning a 102 sped fig.*
2. **#8 – Lionhearted Lady (12-1):** *Appears to be in the best physical condition of her career earning back-to-back 90+ BSFs; away since October but love the recent A.M. drills*
3. **#6 – Galiana (6-1):** *All or nothing sort (30:15-3-4) is 11 for 18 at this distance; 3rd race after layoff and back facing fillies & mares.*
4. **#1 – Dulcify (10-1):** *Seeks natural Hat Trick for owner/trainer Magee; earned career best (95) BSF in last outing despite traffic.*

- ✓ **THE REST OF THE GANG #2 – Dallas Cowgirl (20-1)** has been on the bench since winning a \$30,000 Handicap race at CT in late May. This lightly raced (10:4-2-2) four-year-old KY-bred daughter of Cowboy Cal has been sporadically training at Pen since mid-September. She was overmatched in her lone stakes race when sent off at odds of 25-1... **#3 – Medaglia d’Argento (20-1)** seems to have gate issues as the comment lines in four of her last five races reference trouble at the post. In all four of those races she finished off-the-board. This NY shipper for George Weaver won her only start at Laurel Park, a N1X event on a sloppy track. Even though she’s 0 for 3 going 6 furlongs, with an alert break she could be a threat late... PA-bred **#4 – Raging Smoke (15-1)** takes the next logical step up in class after an 8 race campaign thus far in ’15, getting through N2X and N3X conditions since switching to trainer Mark Salvaggio’s barn. This distance is her best (12: 4-5-1), and she has back class against state bred as she was the runner-up in the ’13 Blue Mountain Juvenile Filly Stakes and won the ’14 New Start Stakes... **#5 – Disco Chick (15-1)** calls Parx home, but completed the trifecta when 17-1 in her lone Laurel outing in this event last year. Trainer Mario Serey, Jr. gave this PA-bred daughter of Jump Start some time off this fall, and she rewarded him in the first race off that layoff with a convincing victory versus \$40,000 N3X and a lofty Brisnet# (96).

