



**"NICK'S  
PICKS"**

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**BELMONT STAKES WEEKEND SELECTIONS**

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**A CASE OF WHINNIES AND WINE**

Like father, like daughter, like sire, like progeny. I really like Cherry Wine.

Twenty-five years ago Virginia-bred Preakness winner Hansel won the Triple Crown rubber match with Kentucky Derby winner Strike the Gold in the Belmont Stakes. The accomplishment demonstrating once again that a Triple Crown doesn't have to be at stake for the Belmont Stakes to be exciting.

At 28, Hansel is still lively living out his golden years at Lazy Lane Farm in Upperville, VA. He was bred by Marvin Little in Virginia shortly before his exodus to Kentucky in the late Eighties. Little's daughter, Theresa, is now an assistant to Dale Romans, who trained 2010 Colonial Turf Cup and Virginia Derby winner Paddy O'Prado, the sire of Cherry Wine. Cherry Wine finished second to Exagerrator in the Preakness three weeks ago.

Those familiar with Paddy O'Prado know of his incredible "horsona". Approaching the paddock before the Virginia Derby at Colonial Downs, the grey beast release a barbaric whinnie that visibly had an impact on the contestants both human and equine alike.

Little led in the walkover to the Preakness rainy infield for Romans recovering from a car accident that happened on the evening of the Kentucky Derby. During the race, Cherry Wine displayed some of that attitude, although not near as amusing. He ducked sharply right coming out of the starting gate and cut his head above his right eye leaving the gate. In a literally gutty performance he chased down the Derby winner, Nyquist, to finish second in Preakness overcoming some 20 lengths. The morning after his Preakness souvenir of three or four surgically places staples was well visible against his grey color as he was eating the flowers outside his stall in the Preakness stakes barn.

Little will watch the Belmont from Romans' Kentucky farm with her son and nephew where she instills "a (Marvin) Little practice to everything they do, from how they treat the land, how they feed the horses, vaccinations, you name it."

"He's just getting better and better as he gets older," compared Romans to during an NTRA press conference. "This horse is doing the same thing. He's just finally mentally putting it all together. So, I was real pleased with his race in the Preakness and I think he's set and ready to go for another big race in the Belmont. I think his pedigree is probably set as much as anybody's to go a mile and a half. Cherry Wine has "a little Paddy O'Prado personality about him," Romans told the Daily Racing Form. "Paddy was the most personable horse I ever had. He was curious about things. He would holler and scream at other horses – never mean. He'd holler at people when they came into the barn, like he wanted them to come visit with him. And this horse is inquisitive. He's not quite as verbal as Paddy.

Paddy O'Prado didn't run in the Belmont Stakes opting for Colonial's twin turf. Cherry Wine will get that chance Saturday. Like every other race, a memorable experience.

**FRIDAY, JUNE 10****RACE 1**

1	<b>ONE MORE ROUND</b>	Back to 1 turn for Lexington runnerup in from the west coast.
4	<b>ENCRYPT</b>	
7	<b>BOMBS AWAY</b>	

**RACE 2**

4	<b>REAL SMART</b>	Balanced field here but only 1 won in last start, that was here at Belmont.
2	<b>PINE NEEDLES</b>	
7	<b>OFF LIMITS</b>	

**RACE 3 - RAGS TO RICHES**

6	<b>THEOGONY</b>	Curlin mare among veterans going 1 & 1/2 on dirt for the 1st time.
2	<b>MEI LING</b>	
4	<b>JOINT RETURN</b>	

**RACE 4 - TREMONT**

2	<b>HEY MIKE</b>	Ward has 2 in field of all winners making 2nd start except Hey Mike Maker.
3	<b>LADY STARDUST</b>	
1	<b>SARATOGA TWO STEP</b>	

**RACE 5 - THE JERSEY GIRL**

7	<b>OFF THE TRACKS</b>	Back to sprints for Pletcher 3 year old who ran well vs. Maggie.
6	<b>KAREENA</b>	
4	<b>QUICK RELEASE</b>	

**RACE 6**

7	<b>STEAMBOAT BILL</b>	Fisher had 'Signature' win at Belmont yet 'Bill' drops after seeing tough foes.
10	<b>FEROCIOUS TIGER</b>	
3	<b>SIGNATURE LOOK</b>	

**RACE 7**

7	<b>ADULATOR</b>	Jenkins' Adulator among 5 who broke maiden in last start.
4	<b>MANIACAL</b>	
6	<b>HOMESPUN HERO</b>	

**RACE 8 - TRUE NORTH (G2)**

3	<b>PRIVATE ZONE</b>	Veteran back in the short "Zone" perhaps facing his heir apparent in "Red".
5	<b>CATALINA RED</b>	
6	<b>ALWAYS SUNSHINE</b>	

**RACE 9 - THE NEW YORK (G2)**

5	<b>PHOTO CALL</b>	Foreign influence could terrify Trump but "Photo" has been here a while.
1	<b>SEA CALISI</b>	
7	<b>GUAPAZA</b>	

**RACE 10 - BELMONT GOLD CUP**

9	<b>KAIGUN</b>	Two mile turf, good option for many elders like Kaigun due to break thru.
5	<b>DA BIG HOSS</b>	
3	<b>CLOSING BELL</b>	

**RACE 11**

8	<b>MOVE FORWARD</b>	Open company horses well poised to compete against New York breds.
7	<b>STREET FIGHTIN MAN</b>	
5	<b>SPACE RANGER</b>	

**SATURDAY, JUNE 11****RACE 1**

2	<b>CUPID</b>	3 in 5-horse field have a Belmont win, 2 at 1&1/16. Yet Cupid seen toughest.
3	<b>RALLY CRY</b>	
5	<b>ECONOMIC MODEL</b>	

**RACE 2**

1	<b>LEMON DROP TITLE</b>	Belmont battlers sire 2 here that never run poor. "Kid" won it in 1999.
6	<b>CONNECT</b>	
5	<b>DOCTOR MOUNTY</b>	

**RACE 3 - ACORN (G1)**

5	<b>CATHRYN SOPHIA</b>	Combined starts of the field at Belmont? 0. Oaks & Susan winner here.
4	<b>CARINA MIA</b>	
6	<b>GO MAGGIE GO</b>	

**RACE 4 - BROOKLYN INVITATION (G2)**

7	<b>KID CRUZ</b>	Cruz bred for 1&1/2 but not tested for it. Belmont works well for him.
2	<b>SAMRAAT</b>	
4	<b>SHAMAN GHOST</b>	

**RACE 5 - OGDEN PHIPPS (G1)**

5	<b>CURALINA</b>	Female elders well qualified with plenty of G1 wins among top runners.
2	<b>STOPCHARGINGMARIA</b>	
4	<b>CAVORTING</b>	

**RACE 6 - JAIPUR (G3)**

2	<b>A LOT</b>	Hard to throw out A Lot at Belmont in a deep group of elder turf sprinters.
14	<b>HOTHERSAL</b>	
9	<b>COMMUTE</b>	

**RACE 7 - WOODY STEPHENS (G2)**

11	<b>MRAZEK</b>	West coast talent comes east to take on the sophomore sprinters.
4	<b>JUSTIN SQUARED</b>	
1	<b>SHARP AZTECA</b>	

**RACE 8 - JUST A GAME (G1)**

8	<b>CELESTINE</b>	Beaugay top 4 return when "Strike" prevailed. Mott introduction big.
1	<b>STRIKE CHARMER</b>	
3	<b>TAPITRY</b>	

**RACE 9 - METROPOLITAN (G1)**

7	<b>STANFORD</b>	Pletcher absolutely loaded with 3 huge bids. Stanford solves geometry.
4	<b>NOBLE BIRD</b>	
12	<b>ANCHOR DOWN</b>	

**RACE 10 - MANHATTAN (G1)**

3	<b>WAKE FOREST</b>	Five here from Divisidero gem race at Churchill. Only 1 from Man'O War.
11	<b>DIVISIDERO</b>	
5	<b>BIG BLUE KITTEN</b>	

**RACE 11 - BELMONT STAKES (G1)**

3	<b>CHERRY WINE</b>	Faddy horse starting to show in hard headed colt, my best shot to spoil.
11	<b>EXAGGERATOR</b>	
4	<b>SUDDENBREAKINGNEWS</b>	

**RACE 12**

6	<b>ANIMAL INSTINCT</b>	Prefer short resumes. Winners win, gamers game, hangers hang.
1	<b>ROMAN APPROVAL</b>	
8	<b>FUNDAMENTAL</b>	

**RACE 13**

10	<b>WATERSHED</b>	Watershed glad not to see Runhappy or Dubai. Can Kiaran sweep?
2	<b>AMORAL</b>	
5	<b>DANNIE'S DECEIVER</b>	