

IN FOCUS:

CHARLES TOWN THANKSGIVING CARD

RACE 8: \$30,000 AUTUMN HANDICAP

- ✓ 10:15 pm EST, \$30,000 purse for WV-bred three-year-olds and up, 7 furlongs

THE FIELD IN FULL

1. **Ello Govna (3-1)** – Figgins trainee had no answers last out in the A Huevo; the only horses he beat were 53-1 and 131-1. But note that he owns five wins at the trip and seven over the strip. He'll need to get back to best form here, but you have to wonder if last was one too many, and others attract more.
2. **In the Fairway (8-1)** – Posse gelding has eight wins at the trip and is a multiple stakes winner. The bad news? He's working on a 10-race losing skein and faces two hear that bested him last out.
3. **Follow the Notion (12-1)** – Seemed a little uncomfortable up the backstretch last out when beaten favorite, and though he made a grinding run wasn't much of a threat to catch the winner. Past Onion Juice winner ('16) will need plenty of pace help here, and declining recent form suggests this might be a tough one.
4. **Fear the Turtle (10-1)** – David Walters-trained runner keeps passing harder tests and now owns four straight wins and five overall in eight starts. Last out he overcame a bit of a rough start to outlast allowance foes (including *Follow the Notion*). The waters get deeper here, but this 4yo still has upside and can contend with these.
5. **Creative Mist (30-1)** – Freddie Johnson trainee has done his best work around three turns and last out controlled up front to post a head win against allowance foes, but cutback to 7f doesn't bode well; he's winless in 10 tries at the trip and doesn't have the speed to outfoot other rivals here early.
6. **Little Big Sime (20-1)** – Hard-hitting veteran is creeping up on \$300k earnings but laboring under a seven-race losing streak, most not close; in fact, he hasn't been in the money in those seven starts. His best hope here is a pace meltdown and that the switch to jock J. D. Acosta helps him discover his better form.
7. **Rocket Road (10-1)** – Didn't run a bad one last out in the A Huevo when fourth in first try in Tim Grams barn, but he's another with plenty of questions to answer: he's lost 13 straight, is winless in a dozen tries at the distance, and has done best work around three turns.
8. **Hear the Chatter (6-1)** – Onion Juice runner-up put in a good effort that night but couldn't make much dent in *Help a Brother's* advantage, but that's kinda the story for the John Casey trainee; since winning seven of nine (five stakes) to start his career, he's run plenty of good races, but there's usually been a better horse in front of him.
9. **Help a Brother (5-2)** – This Lewis Craig runner ran big last out to lodge his second Onion Juice triumph in three years, and there's plenty of reason to think he might knock this race down too. The Windsor Castle gelding's become a front-running sort of late, and he's drawn well outside here, too, which will let him eyeball other speed types – which are not numerous -- before committing. Major player.
10. **Mean Bean (5-1)** – Up-and-comer has won four of his last nine and has been in the exacta six straight; never worse than third at the trip in seven tries. Last out ran second to North Atlantic, who later ran second in the WV Breeders Classic and then won the A Huevo – but that was now four months ago. He's fired fresh before but he'll need the race of his life to get the money here.
11. **(ae) Prince of Windsor (9-2)** – If he draws in off the AE, this one rates a major shot here; led a long way last out before settling for second in the A Huevo and cuts back here to distance where he owns five wins. Has finished behind a couple of these in other events, though, and will need his "A" game here.

RACE 6 PICKS

- **Race particulars: Post time 9:18 p.m., \$5,000 claiming N2X, 1 1/8 miles**
1. **#9 Rain On Fire (4-1):** Ronney Brown trainee was stopped on heels mid-turn last out but stuck with it to the end; clean trip here should be good enough
 2. **#8 Gemini Dream (3-1):** Crystal Pickett-trained WV-bred has made good use of state-bred conditions, tries open company for first time; three wins in the bank put her ahead of others
 3. **#4 Charismatic Miss (15-1):** Doesn't show much interest in winning but has been in the money both tries at the distance
 4. **#12 Windsor's Sunshine (8-1):** Probably won't draw in but projects to be lone speed if she does

RACE 7 PICKS

- **Race particulars: Post time 9:47 p.m., \$12,500 claiming N3L (S), 4 1/2 furlongs**
1. **#6 Dimitri's Romance (4-1):** Speedster stands to benefit from cutback to 4 1/2 furlongs, drawn outsider other speed players
 2. **#5 Demay's Castle (6-1):** Casey trainee can improve in second off six-month break, looks to have pace to run at
 3. **#3 Catliketendencies (7-2):** Found initial foray into claiming ranks a friendly one last out
 4. **#8 Like Me Or Not (5-2):** Favorite has competed with similar before, drops from better company

RACE 8: AUTUMN HANDICAP PICKS

1. **#9 Help a Brother (5-2):** Favorite in good form, has too many advantages to ignore

2. **#4 Fear the Turtle (10-1):** Can't ignore a lightly raced sort handling everything thrown at him, and value will be there
3. **#10 Mean Bean (5-1):** Improving sort loves this trip
4. **#11 Prince of Windsor (9-2):** Don't sleep on this guy if he draws in

RACE 9 PICKS

- **Race particulars: Post time 10:42 p.m., Maiden special weight (S), 6 1/2 furlongs**
1. **#7 Charitable Luck (7-2):** Not convinced trip troubles in last couple as severe as they seem on the page, but this Casey trainee is more lightly raced than some of her rivals
 2. **#6 Across America (5-2):** Was wide much of the way in last, doggedly took second
 3. **#9 Bolicina (12-1):** Repelled by 1-2 chalk in last, can improve here and gets new jock in the irons
 4. **#2 Classy Lakefield (5-1):** Competitive against similar at MNR and may benefit from added ground here

\$0.50 PICK FOUR (RACES 6-9)

- Race 6: 8, 9
- Race 7: 3, 5, 6
- Race 8: 4, 9
- Race 9: 2, 6, 7, 9

TOTAL COST: \$24.00