

IN FOCUS: WEST VIRGINIA BREEDERS CLASSIC XXX

Welcome to *In Focus: West Virginia Breeders Classics XXX*, your guide to the evening's races!

This *In Focus* guide is published by *The Racing Biz*, the independent voice for mid-Atlantic racing and breeding, in conjunction with West Virginia Breeders Classics. It zeroes in on the four biggest races of the evening!

RACE 3 – West Virginia Onion Juice Breeders Classic



- ✓ Three-year-olds and up, 7 furlongs
- ✓ Purse: \$80,000
- ✓ In the last eight renewals of this and the Cavada, both at 7f, five of 16 winners were on the lead after a half-mile; five more were within one length of the leader, and only three times has the winner been more than three lengths behind at that point... Favorite has won two of the last three runnings.

FOUR TO WATCH

- ✓ Defending champ **#9 Help a Brother (5-2)** prepped for this going 4 ½ furlongs, followed similar path last year to victory but was probably a little bit better then than he is now; stomped by the favorite here two back... **#7 In the Fairway (7-5)**, the 2013 winner, was fourth in here a year ago but seems to have discovered the Fountain of Youth and owns four wins and two seconds from six starts this year; figures to use stalk-and-pounce style here in a race light on quality speed... Veteran **#6 Comeonletsplay (8-1)** capped a good '15 with runner-up effort in this event, but will need very best to crack the top pair... **#1 Follow the Notion (3-1)** employed a monster late rally after early trouble to run down the speed in the final jumps last out; must improve here.

RACE 5 - West Virginia Breeders Classic Distaff

- ✓ Fillies and mares three-year-olds and up, 1 1/8 miles
- ✓ Purse: \$80,000
- ✓ In the last eight renewals of this and the Classic, both at 1 1/8 miles, only once has a horse won after leading after a half-mile, and only three winners were on the lead after three-quarters. Four were more than three lengths back after three quarters... Favorite or second choice has won five straight.

FOUR TO WATCH

- Veteran **#1 Blisstikus (4-1)** was third in this event a year ago and is winless in three tries at the trip; runner owns seven wins at CT...Defending champ **#4 Spa Creek (5-2)** threw in a clunker last out in the Sadie Hawkins, but top rivals from that are in the Cavada rather than here; note that regular pilot Bocachica picks **#6 March Wind (2-1)** over **#4 Spa Creek**; she won only prior three-turn tilt by eight lengths, though speed figs a little light for this... **#5 Harlan's Destiny (8-1)**, once a highly touted juvenile, ran fourth in a G3 early in '15 but has struggled since; connections hoping easy win last out presages return to better form, which would put her right there.

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RACE 7 – West Virginia Cavada Breeders Classic

- ✓ Fillies and mares Three-year-olds and up, 7 furlongs
- ✓ Purse: \$150,000
- ✓ In the last eight renewals of this and the Onion Juice, both at 7f, five of 16 winners were on the lead after a half-mile; five more were within one length of the leader, and only three times has the winner been more than three lengths behind at that point... Favorite or second choice has won eight straight.

FOUR TO WATCH

- Presence of speedy Nay's Back in here might be the best news for closer **#7 Red Hot Diva (3-1)**; her late run in the Sadie Hawkins was foiled as leaders managed a glacial pace and stayed on; But jockey Montano jumps ship to #8... **#6 Navy Ribbon (5-2)** was dead game last out in wearing down #4 Candy Man's Girl to get the money and has defeated that rival, albeit narrowly, three times; owns spotless 7-for-7 record over the strip and likely looks for a stalking trip... **#8 Dimples (6-1)** tired to fourth going 1 1/8 miles last out and repeatedly finished behind #7 Red Hot Diva and #4 Candy Man's Girl, but like to see top pilot Montano signed on... Defending champ **#5 Cuppa Mocha Mojo (5-1)** hasn't found the range this year and had no great excuse last out after stalking moderate pace; top Laurel rider Carrasco in for the mount

EARLY PICK 4 (races 2-5)

- ❖ Race 2: 6, 7
- ❖ Race 3: 7
- ❖ Race 4: 4, 6, 8, 9
- ❖ Race 5: 4, 5, 6
- ❖ Ticket Cost (\$1 unit): \$24.00

RACE 8 – West Virginia Breeders Classic

- ✓ Three-year-olds and up, 1 1/8 miles
- ✓ Purse: \$500,000
- ✓ In the last eight renewals of this and the Classic, both at 1 1/8 miles, only once has a horse won after leading after a half-mile, and only three winners were on the lead after three-quarters. Four were more than three lengths back after three quarters... Last favorite to win was Russell Road (2011)

FOUR TO WATCH

- Defending champ **#9 Charitable Annuity (8-5)** has only one three-turn loss over the strip, and that came in the G2 CT Classic; has shown ability to lead, stalk, or close this season and figures likely to sit off major speed players here... **#3 Ello Govna (5-1)** just missed last out in the Gall against 7f specialist In the Fairway, wore down #2 Slip the Cable three back; breeding says the distance should work, and note top rider Montano chooses this one over trainer's other entrant; should be forwardly placed here... **#7 Prince of Windsor (6-1)** has two narrow misses versus the favorite, including in the A Huevo at the trip last November; finished fifth in this event in '15... Trainer Jeff Runco is not in the habit of putting horses in bad spots, and here he sends out a speed horse in talented #2 Slip the Cable and a late runner with **#5 Navigate (20-1)**.

LATE PICK 4 (races 6-9)

- ❖ Race 6: 6, 10
- ❖ Race 7: 6, 7
- ❖ Race 8: 5, 7, 9
- ❖ Race 9: 2, 4, 9
- ❖ Ticket Cost (\$1 unit): \$36.00

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WVBC STORYLINES

West Virginia Breeders Classic Dash for Cash

The end may be drawing night for **#4 Greenway Court (5-2)**, defending champ in the 4 ½ furlong *Dash for Cash*. He capped a perfect '15 with a dominant score in this event but is winless in three starts this year. He'll need to find his early zip if he hopes to get past ultra-speedy **#7 Eutaw Street (8-5)**, winner of the It's Only Money, or John Casey trainee **Hear the Chatter (3-1)**, never worse than second at the one-turn trip.

West Virginia Breeders Classic Vincent Moscarelli Memorial

#6 Unrideabull (5-2) impressed in an accident-marred renewal of the Henry Mercer Memorial last out and has to be the favorite in the 6 ½ furlong *Moscarelli Memorial* for two-year-olds. But **#7 Lime House Louie (3-1)** is a stake-winner himself – on the grass – and owns a win on the dirt, while **#3 Runnin'toluvya (6-1)** scored by a half-dozen lengths to break his maiden last out.

West Virginia Lottery Breeders Classic

Bullets Fever (6-5) is undefeated in seven career starts and looks to have the edge on the group in the the *WV Lottery*, for three-year-olds going seven furlongs. The only complicating factor may be the presence of other speed types, including **Ellie's Lil Man (10-1)** and **Cat Come Home (15-1)**. If the pace heats up, look for **North Atlantic (5-1)**, **Castle Bound (9-2)**, and **Green Time (6-1)** as potential beneficiaries.

West Virginia Division of Tourism Breeders Classic

In a renewal of the 7-furlong *WV Division of Tourism* for three-year-old fillies that lacks apparent standouts, trainer Jeff Runco might run one-two with favored **#3 T Rex Express (6-5)** – runner-up to Return to Denis, who picks the Distaff over this, in the Bishop – and the improving **#10 New London (4-1)**.

West Virginia Triple Crown Nutrition Breeders Classic

In the nightcap, the *Triple Crown Nutrition* for two-year-old fillies going 6 ½ furlongs, the top four from last month's Rachel's Turn reconvene. **#2 Unaquoi (2-1)** registered a front-running score that day for her second straight win, but it wouldn't be a huge shock to see one of those other rivals turn the tables, including that race's beaten favorite, **#9 Scottish Denis (5-2)**.

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