

Jim Mazur's
2026
Derby Day
Epilog

Published By
Progressive Handicapping, Inc.
9630 NW 39th Ct • Hollywood, FL 33024
1-800-272-8039

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First Print Date: May 4, 2026

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As is my custom, I always recap the Oaks and Derby day cards. Let's see how things turned out.

Selections For Race 1

	Prog #	Horse	Comment if any
<i>Most Likely to Win</i>	11	Powershift (3-1)	More likely to be odds on considering he has lost to two Ky Derby entrants in his first two starts.
<i>Value Plays</i>	3	Silent Way (4-1)	Improved Beyers when stretched sprint to route; gets major rider switch and has upset chance if fave falls flat.
<i>Bombers</i>	4	Ingleborough (20-1)	Ran 5th on synthetic sprinting in debut. Romans bats 27% with 2nd time starters and there is a bullet in the holster.
<i>Heads Up</i>	9	Winston Ave (9-2)	If Baffert hasn't won with him 4 starts...that's a negative.

I was hoping that my BOMBER would run 2nd at a big number. He just missed and wound up 3rd behind the chalky MOST LIKELY over VALUE PLAYER.

Selections For Race 2

	Prog #	Horse	Comment if any
<i>Most Likely to Win</i>	8	Taptastic (3-1)	Broke mdn at first asking and then ran 3rd in the Ark Derby. Should be along in time.
<i>Value Plays</i>	4	Memory (9-2)	Both VALUE PLAYERS ran poorly in their career debuts but then won 2nd time out posting major Beyer tops. Both of them should be on the pace engine and each goes for top connections. I love it when a runner's Beyers improve while moving from sprint to route. I'm thinking this guy sneaks away at 10-1. I like him to win and under the fave.
	9	Our Moneyman (6-1)	
<i>Bombers</i>	11	Lincoln's Law (10-1)	Gets blinkers after running two good ones to start its career at GP.

I missed the boat here as two LOWIs ran 1-2 for a \$300 exacta. My guys ran underneath that pair. That LOWI angle is so strong even when the runners look overmatched.

Selections For Race 3

	Prog #	Horse	Comment if any
<i>Most Likely to Win</i>	10	Vibe (6-1)	Has a conditioning edge over several of logicals coming off the bench like John Hancock and Who Dey,
<i>Value Plays</i>	6	Who Dey (9-2)	Lots of speed signed on which gives this guy a shot IF he is ready for his seasonal debut.
<i>Bombers</i>	14	Bullard (12-1)	Was on the Derby trail last year. Speed figs improved when blinks were added two races back.
<i>Heads Up</i>	12	Praetor (3-1)	Disappointed at this level in latest despite top connections.

We hit the homerun in this one as VIBE scored at 7-1 and BULLARD literally bulled his way through to get the place with WHO DEY running 3rd. The exacta came back \$278 while the tri paid \$352 for \$0.50. You are welcome!

Selections For Race 4 Derby City Distaff

	Prog #	Horse	Comment if any
<i>Most Likely to Win</i>	5	Splendora (2-1)	Give an edge here to the BC FM Sprint champ as she has two races under her belt. Looks tough.
<i>Value Plays</i>	4	Ways and Means (8-5)	Race history shows only one winner in 29 editions able to score off the bench in a seasonal debut. Classy mare is 5-2-1-1 at the distance but is 0'er in two previous CD starts.
<i>Bombers</i>	6	R Disaster (6-1)	No real BOMBERS in here. Saffie Joseph Jr runs a pair in here but has Haulin Ice crossentered in the Unbridled Sydney on the Oaks undercard. No matter. the plan with R Disaster is to try and steal this on the front end. Too bad the field isn't larger so we could get double digit odds on this one.

I'm usually on the wrong side of Saffie Joseph Jr but not this time. R DISASTER got to the front and held off the BC FM Sprint champ and the classy WAYS AND MEANS. Nice 7-1 payoff.

The CD Turf Sprint (Leg 5 of the OPENING PICK 5):

<i>Selections For The CD Turf Sprint</i>	
<i>Most Likely to Win</i>	Litigation (3-1)
<i>Value Plays</i>	Joe Shiesty (6-1)
<i>Bombers</i>	Possiblemente (10-1) Its Bourbon Thirty (15-1)

<i>“C” TEAM</i>	
#	Horse
	#1 #2 #4 #5

<i>“A” TEAM</i>	
#	Horse
3	My Boy Prince (5-2)
6	Its Bourbon Thirty (15-1)
9	Litigation (3-1)
10	Joe Shiesty (6-1)

<i>“B” TEAM</i>	
#	Horse
7	Yellow Card (9-2)
8	Mondogetsbuckets (8-1)

An outside post plus a last prep in the Shakertown was the KEY angle in this race before it got derailed for a few editions...but now it has produced the last two including YELLOW CARD. I thought others were better and went all in on JOE SHIESTY. But Prat on YELLOW CARD collared him at the wire. I had to settle for the exacta.

The Knicks Go

<i>Selections For The Knicks Go</i>	
<i>Most Likely to Win</i>	Be You (7-2)
<i>Value Plays</i>	Tour Player (4-1) Capital Idea (5-1)
<i>Bombers</i>	Brotha Keny (15-1)

<i>“A” TEAM</i>	
#	Horse
4	Be You (7-2)
6	Tour Player (4-1)
10	Capital Idea (5-1)

<i>“C” TEAM</i>	
#	Horse
	#2 #3 #5 #7 #8 #9

<i>“B” TEAM</i>	
#	Horse
1	Brotha Keny (15-1)

Flavian Prat is riding well as are the Ortiz brothers. Prat rode VALUE PLAYER TOUR PLAYER to a not so value-laden 3-1 score. I went a little deeper underneath and caught J L Ortiz riding MOONLIGHT for a double nickle exacta.

Distaff Turf Mile (1st Leg of the \$0.20 Derby City Pick 6 mandatory payout)

<i>Selections For The American Turf</i>	
<i>Most Likely to Win</i>	Sweet Rebecca (5-2)
<i>Value Plays</i>	Classic Q (6-1) Pin Up Betty (7-2)
<i>Bombers</i>	Italian Soiree (10-1) Movin' On Up (12-1)

<i>"C" TEAM</i>	
#	Horse
	#6

<i>"A" TEAM</i>	
#	Horse
1	Italian Soiree (10-1)
2	Sweet Rebecca (5-2)
3	Portfolio Duration (4-1)
8	Pin Up Betty (7-2)

<i>"B" TEAM</i>	
#	Horse
4	Temptable (8-1)
5	Classic Q (6-1)
7	Movin' On Up (12-1)
9	Maggie Go (8-1)

This race kicked off the Derby Pick 6 and was so competitive that I took the ALL button. Good move as I wasn't crazy about CLASSIC Q and tried to make a score with my two BOMBERS. They didn't hit the board but I got 6-1 on CLASSIC Q.

Pat Day Mile (1st Leg of the Derby Pick 5)

<i>Selections For The Pat Day Mile</i>	
<i>Most Likely to Win</i>	Crown the Buckeye (6-1)
<i>Value Plays</i>	Trouble Calling (5-1) Creole Chrome (8-1)
<i>Bombers</i>	Secured Freedom (20-1) Stop the Car (20-1)

<i>“C” TEAM</i>					
#	Horse				
	#3	#9	#10	#11	#12

<i>“A” TEAM</i>	
#	Horse
2	Trouble Calling (5-1)
4	Secured Freedom (20-1)
7	Crown the Buckeye (6-1)
8	Creole Chrome (8-1)

<i>“B” TEAM</i>	
#	Horse
1	Englishman (3-1)
5	Stop the Car (20-1)
6	Crude Velocity (5-2)

I didn't have a strong opinion in this race except that I didn't like either of the two faves—ENGLISHMAN and CRUDE VELOCITY. I was hoping that my MOST LIKELY would outclass the two wannabes but they were the real deal and ran 1-2. No problem as both were on my Pick 6 ticket even though I relegated them to the “B” TEAM.

American Turf (Leg 1 Derby Pick 4);

<i>Selections For The American Turf</i>	
<i>Most Likely to Win</i>	Stark Contrast (4-1)
<i>Value Plays</i>	Remember Mamba (9-2) Alpyland (8-1)
<i>Bombers</i>	Vasy (10-1) Thousandsticks (15-1)

<i>“C” TEAM</i>									
#	Horse								
	#1	#3	#5	#6	#8	#9	#11	#14	

<i>“A” TEAM</i>	
#	Horse
4	Stark Contrast (4-1)
7	Alpyland (8-1)
10	Vasy (10-1)
12	Remember Mamba (9-2)
13	Thousandsticks (15-1)

<i>“B” TEAM</i>	
#	Horse
2	Let’s Be Frank (30-1)

This race produced my strongest opinion on the card. I thought STARK CONTRAST was a stickout and singled him on some of my Pick 6 backup tickets. But what we are all looking for is the longshot BOMBER to run underneath so we can cash a nice exacta and trifecta.

But on this day and in this race, the chalk mites did all the cheering as my MOST LIKELY ran on top of REMEMBER MAMBA and that was bet down to 3-1. Ughhhhhhhh.

CD Hdcp (Leg 1 of the Final Pick 5); (Leg 4 of the Oaks/Derby Pick 6);

<i>Selections For The CD Handicap</i>	
<i>Most Likely to Win</i>	Knightsbridge (9-5)
<i>Value Plays</i>	Cornucopian (7-2) Disruptor (8-1)
<i>Bombers</i>	T O Elvis (30-1) Point Dume (15-1)

"C" TEAM				
#	Horse			
	#1	#4	#9	#10

"A" TEAM	
#	Horse
2	Cornucopian (7-2)
5	Disruptor (8-1)
6	Knightsbridge (9-5)
8	T O Elvis (30-1)
11	Point Dume (15-1)

"B" TEAM	
#	Horse
3	Macho Music (30-1)
7	Imagination (6-1)

T O Elvis ships in from Japan and owns a 8-5-0-3 record but only one start at 7f (finished 3rd). I did watch the replay of his most recent race which was way back in December. He had one heck of an explosive move to win by daylight. There aren't any world beaters in here so maybe the Japanese connections of Derby entrant Wonder Dean get the ball rolling on the undercard.

That was my comment on selecting TO ELVIS as my CO-BOMBER. Explosive move to be sure. He won by daylight but his 30-1 melted down to 5-1. Very discouraging.

Turf Classic (Start of Derby Daily Double; Leg 5 of the Oaks/Derby Pick 6)

<i>Selections For The Turf Classic</i>	
<i>Most Likely to Win</i>	Test Score (7-2)
<i>Value Plays</i>	Asbury Park (8-1)
<i>Bombers</i>	Mercante (12-1)

<i>“A” TEAM</i>	
#	Horse
3	Asbury Park (8-1)
5	Mercante (12-1)
9	Test Score (7-2)

<i>“C” TEAM</i>					
	#1	#2	#7	#8	#10

<i>“B” TEAM</i>	
#	Horse
4	Program Trading (4-1)
6	Rhetorical (5-2)

I knew this race was a puzzle so that's why I hit the ALL button on my Pick 6 ticket. Of course when you punch that button you want 10-1...20-1...even 7-1. But not the 2-1 fave, RHETORICAL. He had never tried 9f and that is always a key factor in this race from a history standpoint.

But it was a weak group and he won convincingly. But at 2-1 he muted all the payoffs on the PICK 6 WILL PAYS.

THE KENTUCKY DERBY

<i>Selections For The Kentucky Derby</i>	
<i>Most Likely to Win</i>	Commandment (6-1) Renegade (4-1)
<i>Value Plays</i>	The Puma (10-1) scratch Chief Wallabee (8-1)
<i>Bombers</i>	So Happy (15-1) Fulleffort (20-1)

"A" TEAM	
#	Horse
1	Renegade (4-1)
6	Commandment (6-1)
9	The Puma (10-1) scratch
12	Chief Wallabee (8-1)
20	Fulleffort (20-1)

"B" TEAM	
#	Horse
8	So Happy (15-1)
10	Wonder Dean (30-1)
15	Emerging Market (15-1)
18	Further Ado (6-1)

"C" TEAM	
#	Horse
	#2 #3 #4 #5 #7 #11 #14 #16 #17 #19 #21 #22-24 all AE

It seemed like the history books got rewritten alot this weekend. Chad Brown wins the Oaks with ALWAYS A RUNNER off just two career starts. Several undercard stakes races didn't run true to form and the winners bucking history weren't even a price.

And so it was no surprise that the Derby produced the first winner to exit the Louisiana Derby when GOLDEN TEMPO unleashed a furious rally. It also marked the first victory by a female trainer and got J L Ortiz off the Derby schnied.

The Pick 6 paid almost \$10k but could've been 10 or 20x that if some prices had hit on the undercard sequence. It was 6-1 in the opening leg and then three popular faves after that with Japanese upsetter ML 30-1 winding up off at 5-1. Woof.

I hit the P6 and cashed a single Pick 5 in the Oaks but then lost a sizable ticket wagered on the Oaks/Derby P6.

I rarely pay attention to the two post Derby races but I liked a turf-to-dirt angle in the finale at 12-1 ML. So for giggles I took ALL in the Derby to start a P3 and took two bullets in the 2nd leg and singled PRIZE PICK in the finale...bingo. Thanks to the Derby upsetter, the Pick 3 came back \$2,200. All you need are some prices!

Two weeks to regroup until Crabcake time.

Selections For Race 13

	Prog #	Horse	Comment if any
<i>Most Likely to Win</i>	8	Gilded Bandit (3-1)	Both starts solid and last was a corker. He could regress off that effort and still beat these.
<i>Value Plays</i>	11	Noble Affair (9-2)	Two solid efforts after Asmussed moved him from turf to dirt. Big chance if top pick regresses,
<i>Bombers</i>	6	Cruisin Chuck (15-1)	This colt isn't bred for the grass but found himself racing on that surface for the first 5 starts of his career. Trainer Foley bats 17% with the turf to dirt move. If this guy improves off his turf figs, he could light up the tote or at least spice up the verticals.
<i>Heads up</i>	10	Buetane (5-2)	Was on the Derby trail but obviously needs LASIX and is a risky proposition at 5-2. I'm playing against.

Selections For Race 14

	Prog #	Horse	Comment if any
<i>Most Likely to Win</i>	8	Find No Fault (9-2)	Solid debut and trainer hits 27% with 2nd time starters. The FTS don't look like much except for Baffert's below.
<i>Value Plays</i>	9	Big Jake (8-1)	Half of the field are FTS and only this guy has decent FTS ratings (B+/C+) and of course the usual string of strong Baffert works.
<i>Bombers</i>	6	Prize Pick (12-1)	I love the angle when a runner shows speed in a turf route and then cuts back to 7f. That's what you have here. Note this guy was favored last time and is now 12-1 ML.
	11	Great Moment (12-1)	Something woke this guy up in '26 as his last two were much better than his first 5. May not upset but could pick up the pieces.
	13	Noble Anthem (20-1)	Also backed last time out when going sprint to route. Now cuts back to a sprint and is totally forgotten.