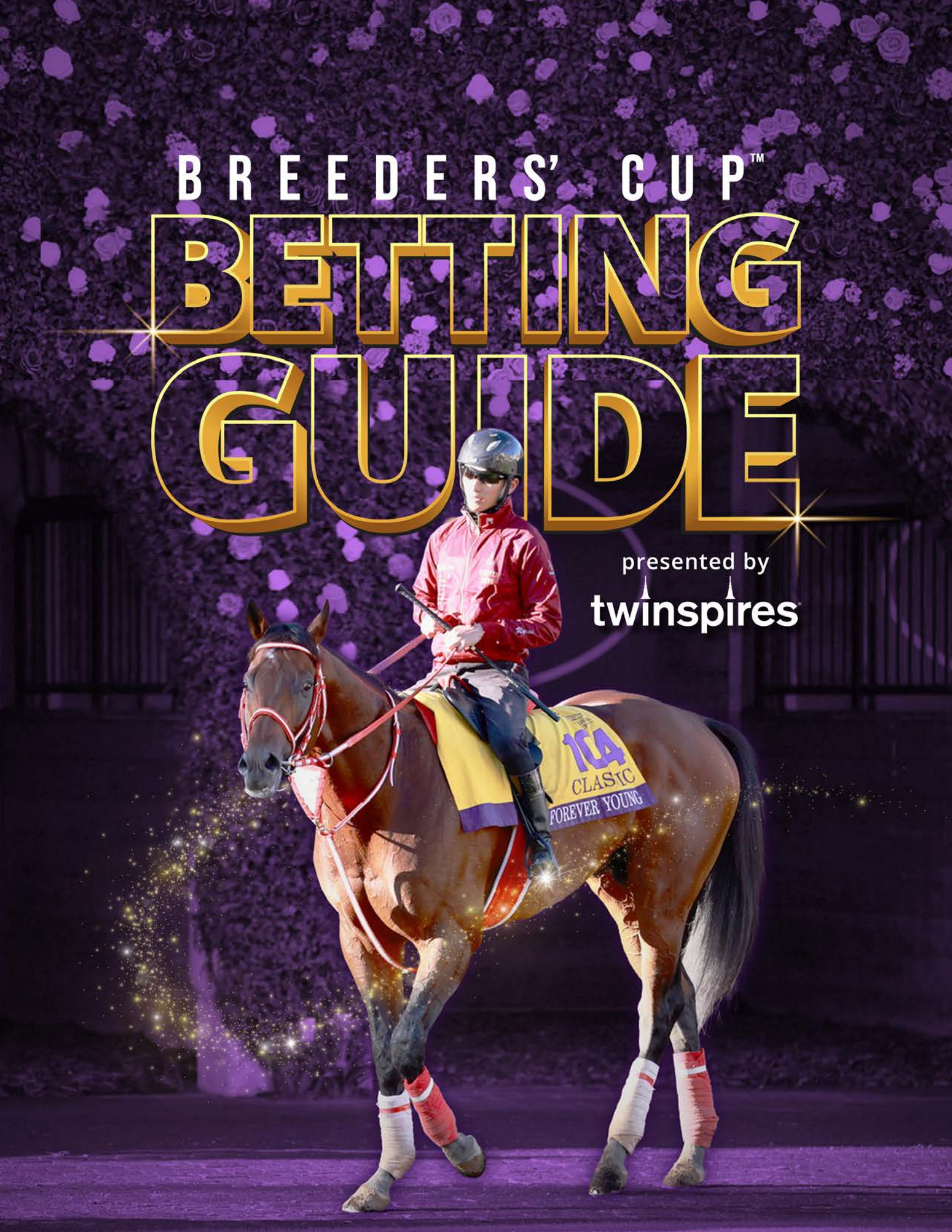
# BREEDERS' CUP™ BETTING GUIDE

presented by twinspires



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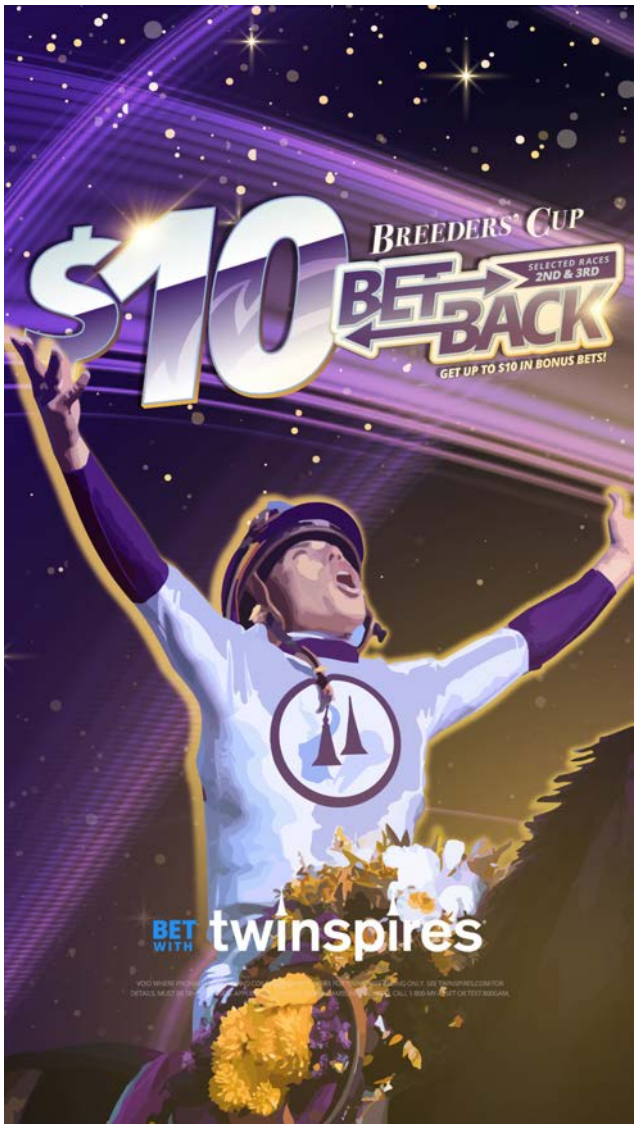


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# BREEDERS' CUP RACE SCHEDULE

**Friday, October 30, 2026**

| RACE | POST TIME | RACE NAME |
|---|---|---|
| Race 1 | 11:55 AM ET / 8:55 AM PT | The Headley |
| Race 2 | 12:30 PM ET / 9:30 AM PT | The Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance Stakes |
| Race 3 | 1:05 PM ET / 10:05 AM PT | The Bosque Bonita |
| Race 4 | 1:40 PM ET / 10:40 AM PT | The Lanark |
| Race 5 | 2:15 PM ET / 11:15 AM PT | The Haggin |
| Race 6 | 2:55 PM ET / 11:55 AM PT | Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf Sprint (G1) |
| Race 7 | 3:35 PM ET / 12:35 PM PT | Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies (G1) |
| Race 8 | 4:15 PM ET / 1:15 PM PT | Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf (G1) |
| Race 9 | 4:55 PM ET / 1:55 PM PT | Breeders' Cup Juvenile (G1) |
| Race 10 | 5:35 PM ET / 2:35 PM PT | Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf (G1) |

**Saturday, October 31, 2026**

| RACE | POST TIME | RACE NAME |
|---|---|---|
| Race 1 | 11:15 AM ET / 8:15 AM PT | The Keene Place |
| Race 2 | 11:50 AM ET / 8:50 AM PT | The Maine Chance |
| Race 3 | 12:25 PM ET / 9:25 AM PT | The Fall Harvest |
| Race 4 | 1:10 PM ET / 10:10 AM PT | Breeders' Cup Filly & Mare Sprint (G1) |
| Race 5 | 1:48 PM ET / 10:48 AM PT | Breeders' Cup Turf Sprint (G1) |
| Race 6 | 2:26 PM ET / 11:26 AM PT | Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile (G1) |
| Race 7 | 3:04 PM ET / 12:04 PM PT | Breeders' Cup Filly & Mare Turf (G1) |
| Race 8 | 3:42 PM ET / 12:42 PM PT | Breeders' Cup Sprint (G1) |
| Race 9 | 4:20 PM ET / 1:20 PM PT | Breeders' Cup Mile (G1) |
| Race 10 | 4:58 PM ET / 1:58 PM PT | Breeders' Cup Distaff (G1) |
| Race 11 | 5:36 PM ET / 2:36 PM PT | Breeders' Cup Turf (G1) |
| Race 12 | 6:16 PM ET / 3:16 PM PT | Breeders' Cup Classic (G1) |

*Race order and post times are subject to change.

# BREEDERS' CUP WAGER MENU

**Friday, October 30th, 2026**

| RACE | TIME | WAGERING | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Race 1 | 11:55 AM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | Pick 3 | DD | | Pick 5 | SH-5 |
| Race 2 | 12:30 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | Pick 3 | DD | | Pick 4 | SH-5 |
| Race 3 | 1:05 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | Pick 3 | DD | | Pick 5 | SH-5 |
| Race 4 | 1:40 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | Pick 3 | DD | | Pick 4 | SH-5 |
| Race 5 | 2:15 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | Pick 3 | DD | | Pick 6 | SH-5 |
| Race 6 | 2:55 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | Pick 3<br>$3 All-Turf Pick 3 | DD | | Pick 5 | SH-5 |
| Race 7 | 3:35 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | Pick 3 | DD | SPDD | Pick 4 | SH-5 |
| Race 8 | 4:15 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | $3 Pick 3 | DD | | | SH-5 |
| Race 9 | 4:55 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | | DD | SPDD | | SH-5 |
| Race 10 | 5:35 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | | | SPDD | | SH-5 |

**Saturday, October 31st, 2026**

| RACE | TIME | WAGERING | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Race 1 | 11:15 AM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | Pick 3 | DD | | Pick 5 | SH-5 |
| Race 2 | 11:50 AM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | Pick 3 | DD | | Pick 4 | SH-5 |
| Race 3 | 12:25 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | Pick 3 | DD | | Pick 5 | SH-5 |
| Race 4 | 1:10 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | Pick 3 | DD | | Pick 4 | SH-5 |
| Race 5 | 1:48 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | Pick 3 | DD | | AT-Pick 4, Pick 5 | SH-5 |
| Race 6 | 2:26 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | Pick 3 | DD | | AD-Pick 4, Pick 4 | SH-5 |
| Race 7 | 3:04 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | $3 AT-Pick 3<br>$1 Pick 3 | DD | | Pick 4, Pick 6 | SH-5 |
| Race 8 | 3:42 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | Pick 3 | DD | | Pick 5 | SH-5 |
| Race 9 | 4:20 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | Pick 3 | DD | | Pick 4 | SH-5 |
| Race 10 | 4:58 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | $3 Pick 3 | DD | SPDD | | SH-5 |
| Race 11 | 5:36 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | | DD | | | SH-5 |
| Race 12 | 6:16 PM | WPS | EX | TRI | SUPER | | | | | SH-5 |

# KEENELAND AT A GLANCE

**A look at the previous Keeneland meet.**

**AVG. WINNING ODDS:** 4.99 – 1

**FAVORITE WIN%:** 32% **FAVORITE ITM%:** 64%

| EXOTICS | PAYOFF |
|---|---|
| Pick 3 | 759.65 |
| Pick 4 | 5,114.85 |
| Pick 5 | 17,368.01 |
| Pick 6 | 35,868.08 |
| Daily Double | 93.95 |
| Exacta | 94.20 |
| Superfecta | 6,081.85 |
| Super High Five | 4,418.68 |
| Trifecta | 865.44 |

### TRACK BIAS MEET (10/02 - 10/24)

| Distance | # Race | % Wire | Best Style | Best Posts |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6.0fDirt | 35 | 29% | E | Rail |
| 6.5fDirt | 13 | 38% | E | Outside |
| 1 1/16mDirt | 41 | 15% | E | Rail/Ins |
| 1 1/8mDirt | 6 | 50% | E | Outside |
| Turf Sprint | 9 | 22% | S | Inside |
| Turf Routes | 25 | 24% | E | Rail |

### TRACK BIAS WEEK (10/18 - 10/24)

| Distance | # Race | % Wire | Best Style | Best Posts |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6.0fDirt | 6 | 17% | E/P | Rail/Ins |
| 6.5fDirt | 4 | 75% | E | Outside |
| 1 1/16mDirt | 14 | 0% | E/P | Rail/Ins |
| 1 1/8mDirt | 4 | 75% | E | Rail/Ins |
| Turf Sprint | 2 | 50% | E | Inside |
| Turf Routes | 7 | 29% | E/P | Rail/Ins |

### WHO'S HOT, WHO'S NOT

| HOT TRAINERS | Starts | Wins | Place | Show | Avg. Odds | Winning Favorites | '25-'26 Win % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ward Wesley A. | 18 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 3.91 | 2 | 25% |
| Maker Michael J. | 13 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 6.87 | 1 | 18% |
| McCarthy Michael W. | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 4.13 | 0 | 15% |
| Shirer Matt A. | 6 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 11.08 | 1 | 16% |

| HOT JOCKEYS | Starts | Wins | Place | Show | Avg. Odds | Winning Favorites | '25-'26 Win % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Saez Luis | 39 | 11 | 9 | 2 | 7.29 | 3 | 16% |
| Esquivel Emmanuel | 8 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 13.57 | 0 | 15% |

| COLD TRAINERS | Starts | Wins | Place | Show | Avg. Odds | Winning Favorites | '25-'26 Win % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ennis John | 13 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 21.96 | 1 | 12% |
| Wilkes Ian R. | 12 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 17.16 | 0 | 12% |

| COLD JOCKEYS | Starts | Wins | Place | Show | Avg. Odds | Beaten Favorites | '25-'26 Win % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arrieta Francisco | 12 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 20.47 | 2 | 16% |
| Sheehy Danny | 12 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 33.34 | 0 | 9% |
| Torres Cristian A. | 12 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 19.10 | 0 | 12% |

# EXPERT PICKS FOR BREEDERS' CUP

We've assembled an expert team of handicappers to give their top picks for several key graded stakes races

## FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30 Keeneland

| | Dean Keppler @Keppskorner | Vance Hanson @VPHanson | Kellie Reilly @GallantFox1930 | James Scully @James_Scully111 | Keeler Johnson @J_Keelerman |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **JUVENILE FILLIES (GI)** | 2 Domain Expansion<br>5 Miss Monica<br>6 Revenge of the Sis | 10 Emphatic<br>11 Voyager<br>5 Miss Monica | 5 Miss Monica<br>8 Manuka Honey<br>10 Emphatic | 11 Voyager<br>5 Miss Monica<br>8 Manuka Honey | 10 Emphatic<br>2 Domain Expansion<br>5 Miss Monica |
| **JUVENILE TURF (GI)** | 10 Folsom Blues<br>2 Avec Toi<br>3 Florida Bay | 14 Great Barrier Reef<br>10 Folsom Blues<br>12 Oscar | 2 Avec Toi<br>10 Folsom Blues<br>14 Great Barrier Reef | 4 Haffner<br>7 Let Em Know<br>2 Avec Toi | 11 Man's Best Friend<br>14 Great Barrier Reef<br>4 Haffner |

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31 Keeneland

| | Dean Keppler @Keppskorner | Vance Hanson @VPHanson | Kellie Reilly @GallantFox1930 | James Scully @James_Scully111 | Keeler Johnson @J_Keelerman |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **BREEDERS' CUP FILLY & MARE TURF (GI)** | 11 Precise<br>12 Blue Bolt<br>1 Gimme a Nother | 5 Kathynmarissa<br>12 Blue Bolt<br>13 Lush Lips | 11 Precise<br>12 Blue Bolt<br>4 Red Letter | 1 Gimme a Nother<br>12 Blue Bolt<br>3 Classic Q | 12 Blue Bolt<br>11 Precise<br>8 Jancis |
| **BREEDERS' CUP MILE (GI)** | 8 Notable Speech<br>14 Puerto Rico<br>1 Deterministic | 8 Notable Speech<br>1 Deterministic<br>2 Lake Forest | 8 Notable Speech<br>9 Rhetorical<br>1 Deterministic | 8 Notable Speech<br>2 Lake Forest<br>13 Brilliant Berti | 8 Notable Speech<br>2 Lake Forest<br>1 Deterministic |
| **BREEDERS' CUP TURF (GI)** | 1 Ethical Diamond<br>2 Benvenuto Cellini<br>12 Diamond Necklace | 10 Tiffany<br>13 Bay City Roller<br>12 Ethical Diamond | 2 Benvenuto Cellini<br>12 Diamond Necklace<br>6 Burnham Square | 2 Benvenuto Cellini<br>13 Bay City Roller<br>12 Diamond Necklace | 2 Benvenuto Cellini<br>12 Diamond Necklace<br>14 Deep Monster |
| **BREEDERS' CUP CLASSIC (GI)** | 6 Magnitude<br>2 Sovereignty<br>7 Knightsbridge | 5 Forever Young<br>6 Magnitude<br>2 Sovereignty | 5 Forever Young<br>4 The Puma<br>3 Golden Tempo | 4 The Puma<br>7 Knightsbridge<br>6 Magnitude | 7 Knightsbridge<br>5 Forever Young<br>2 Sovereignty |



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# 2026 BREEDERS' CUP: 10 OBSERVATIONS FROM THE MORNING-LINE ODDS

by Keeler Johnson

### 1. ENGLISHMAN IS THE HEAVIEST FAVORITE

The strongest favorite across the 14 races is #13 Englishman in the Breeders' Cup Sprint (G1). He's listed at 4-5, the only odds-on favorite.

### 2. JUVENILE RACES COULD YIELD CHALKY RESULTS

Three of the five favorites in Friday's juvenile races are listed at under 2-1: #5 Hughes (1-1) in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile (G1), #9 Sun Goddess (6-5) in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf (G1), and #10 Emphatic (9-5) in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies (G1). There's a good chance we'll see favorites win more Breeders' Cup races than they lose on Friday.

### 3. SEVEN RACES FEATURE FAVORITES BELOW 2-1

Across both days of racing, seven of the 14 races feature favorites with odds below 2-1, the same number as in 2025.

### 4. CLASSIC FEATURES WIDE-OPEN FIELD

Five of the eight entrants in the Breeders' Cup Classic (G1) are listed between 2-1 and 6-1 on the morning line, indicating the competitive nature of this year's field. #5 Forever Young (2-1) is the narrow favorite over #2 Sovereignty (5-2).

### 5. AIDAN O'BRIEN TRAINS TWO FAVORITES

Aidan O'Brien is the only trainer who conditions multiple Breeders' Cup favorites: #9 Sun Goddess (6-5) in the Juvenile Fillies Turf and #12 Diamond Necklace (3-1) in the Breeders' Cup Turf (G1).

### 6. SPRINT IS BILLED AS A TWO-HORSE RACE

As far as morning-line odds are concerned, the Sprint is a two-horse race between heavy favorite #13 Englishman (4-5) and Churchill Downs (G1) winner #11 T O Elvis (7-2). They're the only entrants in the 13-horse field listed below 10-1.

### 7. HOW'S AL TODAY, DIAMOND NECKLACE ARE THE LONGEST-PRICED FAVORITES

The title for longest-priced favorite is shared by #12 Diamond Necklace in the Turf and #5 How's Al Today in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf (G1). Both are listed at 3-1.

### 8. NITROGEN, FULLY SUBSCRIBED ARE SHORT PRICES IN DISTAFF

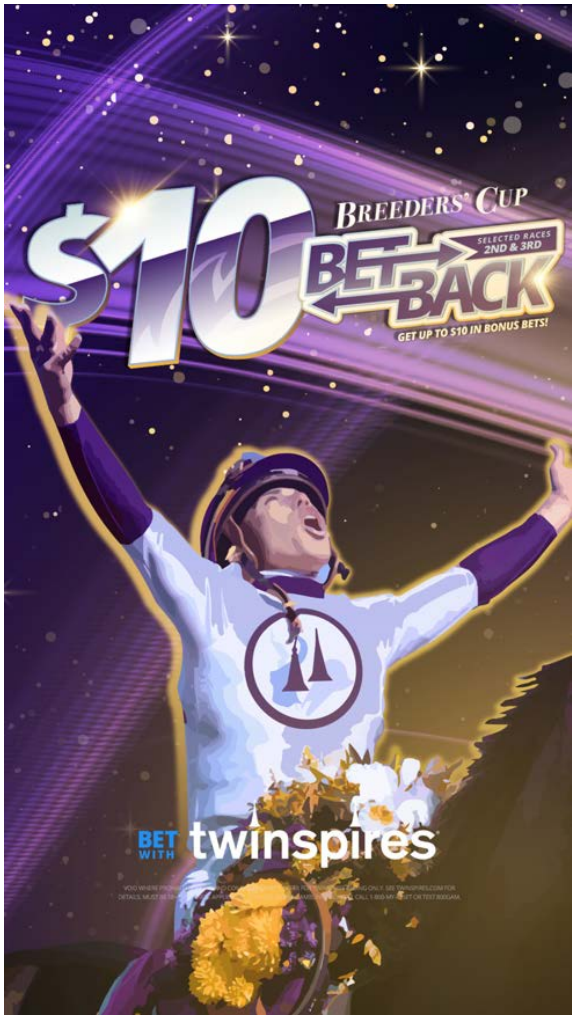
The Breeders' Cup Distaff (G1) is the only race in which two horses are listed below 2-1 odds. #2 Nitrogen (6-5) is the slight favorite over #4 Fully Subscribed (8-5). Is a chalky exacta in the offing?

### 9. FLAVIEN PRAT SLATED TO RIDE FOUR FAVORITES

Two-time Eclipse Award-winning jockey Flavien Prat is named to ride four Breeders' Cup favorites: #5 Hughes (1-1) in the Juvenile, #3 Libertango (5-2) in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf Sprint (G1), #2 Ways and Means (7-5) in the Breeders' Cup Filly & Mare Sprint (G1), and #1 Further Ado (2-1) in the Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile (G1).

### 10. FOREVER YOUNG, NOTABLE SPEECH FAVORED TO SCORE REPEAT WINS

Although 10 past Breeders' Cup winners are entered in this year's Breeders' Cup, only two are favored to win. #5 Forever Young (2-1) is the slim choice to defend his Classic title, while #8 Notable Speech (7-5) is a clear favorite to score a second straight Breeders' Cup Mile (G1) win.



# 2026 BREEDERS' CUP: SPOTLIGHTING TOP RETURNEES FROM 2026

by Alastair Bull

One of the nice things about the Breeders' Cup is the chance for an annual catch-up with some familiar equine friends.

This year, more than 30 horses that have already contested a Breeders' Cup race are returning for another shot, with another couple among the also-entered group. A few of them, such as likely Classic favorite Forever Young, have run twice at the Breeders' Cup, while one, the seven-year-old Nakatomi, is back for his fourth start, all in the Breeders' Cup Sprint.

What makes the Breeders' Cup unique is that returning horses usually face a different track. So though many have run in the end-of-year championships before, most haven't done so at Keeneland. This could help those behind some of the previously defeated brigade believe their fortunes can change this time.

Most racing fans know about Forever Young and Notable Speech, two horses seeking to defend their titles in the Classic and Mile, respectively. This story instead highlights some of the lesser-known and perhaps more intriguing tales.

### SHISOSPICY: BREEDERS' CUP TURF SPRINT

Shisospicy looked like a sprinter with an enormous future when she became the first three-year-old filly to win the Turf Sprint last year, dominating by 2-1/2 lengths. But 2026 has been a virtual write-off. She finished last of seven on her return in the Unbridled Sidney (G2) on May 1, and has been kept off the track with a series of illnesses since. Therefore, she contests the Turf Sprint with just one race in the last 12 months, and this year she has to beat 2024 winner Starlust, 2025 Juvenile Turf Sprint winner Cy Fair, multiple Group 1 winner Comanche Brave, and the favored Wesley Ward-trained Nunthorpe (G1) winner Bacio. It will be a great training effort from trainer Jose D'Angelo if Shisospicy can do it.

### SUPER CORREDORA: BREEDERS' CUP DISTAFF

Like Shisospicy, Super Corredora has had an interesting time since triumphing at last year's Breeders' Cup in the Juvenile Fillies. In two potential Kentucky Oaks preps at the beginning of 2026, she finished down the track, necessitating a break. But she returned in style to win the Zenyatta (G2) on Sept. 27, recording a career-best Brisnet Speed Rating in the process. She didn't win her first race of 2025 until fall arrived, then followed it up with a Breeders' Cup victory; can she do the same in 2026?

### SPLENDORA: BREEDERS' CUP DISTAFF

The list of horses that have won two different Breeders' Cup events open to all ages is very short: Zenyatta (2008 Distaff and 2009 Classic) and Knicks Go (2020 Dirt Mile, 2021 Classic). Splendora is attempting to become the third by adding the 2026 Distaff to the Filly & Mare Sprint that she won a year ago. Her three efforts at 1 1/16 miles this year have all been successful, though they have been in Grade 2 rather than Grade 1 company. She faces her toughest test against much stronger company, but she will have supporters believing in her.

### FULL SERRANO: BREEDERS' CUP DIRT MILE

The Argentine-bred Full Serrano is one of those horses that flies under the radar, only to then come up with a top effort. Two years ago he started at 13-1 in the Dirt Mile and scored by 1-1/2 lengths, and last year he was fifth, a long way behind Nysos. One significant thing to note: in 2024 he used the Pacific Classic (G1) in late August as his final lead-up, finishing second; last year he was second in the Goodwood (G1) in late September prior to his disappointing Dirt Mile run. This year he's followed the Pacific Classic path again, finishing third to Knightsbridge; it's possible the extended lead-in to the Dirt Mile can work again for him.

### RHETORICAL: BREEDERS' CUP MILE

North American-trained horses are finding it harder to win the Breeders' Cup Mile, having triumphed just twice in the past eight runnings, with Godolphin's Charlie Appleby winning four of the last five. Appleby is favored to do it again with Notable Speech, but William Walden hopes last year's fourth-place finisher Rhetorical can turn the result around. Potentially in his favor this year is the shift from Del Mar to Keeneland, where Rhetorical has excelled from three starts at the Lexington track. He's won two versions of the Turf Mile (G1) and finished third in the Maker's Mark Mile (G1).

# KEY 2026 BREEDERS' CUP BETTING CHALLENGE RACES FOLLOWING DRAW

by Alastair Bull

Beating more than 600 betting experts over 22 races on Breeders' Cup weekend is more than enough to fully earn the "challenge" part of the Breeders' Cup Betting Challenge name.

Assessing form from around the world adds another layer to the puzzle. But once you've done all that, the barrier draw adds a final factor.

In general, trainers prefer middle barrier draws on dirt races and inside draws on the tighter turf tracks. Statistics from the two Keeneland meets this year, however, suggest inside draws might be helpful on dirt as well, especially for distance races. To a large degree, it depends on the horse and whether it has early speed or not.

Here's a look at how the draw might impact some of the key races.

### JUVENILE TURF SPRINT

The Breeders' Cup races begin Friday with the Juvenile Turf Sprint, and the two favorites, Libertango and Brickyard Belle, have both drawn nicely at three and four, respectively. In contrast, other leading chances Force Noir, Final Objective, and Harper's Corner have a tougher job in barriers 8, 9, and 10.

### JUVENILE FILLIES

Alcibiades (G1) winner Emphatic has been made the 9-5 morning-line favorite after drawing gate 10, while main market rival Miss Monica (5-2) drew 5. But it's worth noting that Emphatic won the Alcibiades (G1) at Keeneland from gate 1, using early speed, and if she tries to go forward again here, she could get caught wide on the first turn. It may not stop her from winning, but it's worth considering.

### JUVENILE TURF

This looked quite open before the draw, but it's become much tougher for Irish raider Great Barrier Reef after he drew the outside gate of 14. Fellow Irish rival Folsom Blues is only a little better at gate 10, while leading American hope How's Al Today has fared much better with gate 5. Folsom Blues, however, has shown an ability to come from off the pace and has experience around a bend from Longchamp.

### DIRT MILE

Everyone knows how much Further Ado loves Keeneland, which explains why he's been made 2-1 favorite. But will he be suited by gate 1? He's usually at his best when he sits off the pace on the outer and has galloping room, which he may not get here. Challenge bettors may want to anchor him because of his Keeneland affinity, but equally might look for some value given the favorite's gate.

### FILLY & MARE TURF

Is there a reason for BCBC contestants to oppose Blue Bolt with gate 12? It's a difficult spot and will give others some feeling of hope, especially Chad Brown's Kathrynmarissa from gate 5 and Gimme a Nother from gate 1. Class often prevails here, and Blue Bolt has plenty of it, but the gate might make punters want to think carefully about their options.

### TURF

Being the second-last race, this is the serious end of the Challenge, and with the big field, could be a way to find a nice payout. The chances may have increased after Diamond Necklace, who did well to finish third in the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe (G1) from a wide draw, fared badly again here with gate 12. It's interesting that Ryan Moore has opted to ride Benvenuto Cellini rather than her, but there have been occasions when he hasn't got the decision right, so Diamond Necklace shouldn't be ignored. Bay City Roller may be more adversely impacted as he likes to go forward, which will be hard from gate 13. This race could provide some value for BCBC punters.

### CLASSIC

The Breeders' Cup Betting Challenge almost always comes down to the last race, and who can get a big collect at the end. But with an eight-horse field, the draw may not matter. Most notable, however, is that the three potential front-runners, Magnitude, Knightsbridge, and Napoleon Solo, have drawn the outside three gates. Don't be surprised if we see an early speed battle from the outside, with the inside horses letting them have their way. It could set up Forever Young in gate 5 and Sovereignty in gate 2 to sit behind the pace and then unleash their power towards the end.

# BETTING THE 2026 BREEDERS' CUP CLASSIC ON DIFFERENT BUDGETS

by John Mucciolo

A stellar field of eight will run 1 1/4 miles over the Keeneland main strip in Saturday's highly anticipated $7 million Breeders' Cup Classic (G1). The fantastic race is led by defending champ and worldwide superstar #5 Forever Young (2-1), along with the last two Kentucky Derby winners – 2025 hero #2 Sovereignty (5-2) and this year's star #3 Golden Tempo (5-1).

**$20 BUDGET**

- $5 exacta key box 2 with 5,7 ($20)

**$40 BUDGET**

- $1 superfecta 2,7 with 2,5,7 with 2,3,5,7 with all ($40)

**$100 BUDGET**

- $16 win and place #2 Sovereignty ($32)
- $6 exacta key box 2 with 5,7 ($24)
- $3 trifecta 2,7 with 2,5,7 with 2,3,5,7 ($24)
- 50-cent superfecta 2 with 5,7 with 3,4,5,6,7 with all ($20)

I feel the mighty Godolphin operation will have a huge say in the outcome of the tilt and could have their runners go one-two at the finish. Sovereignty needs no introduction for trainer Bill Mott. The superb Into Mischief colt rebounded last time after a pair of subpar showings earlier in 2026 by annihilating his foes in the Whitney (G1) at Saratoga. A perfect three-for-three at 10 furlongs in his career, the stellar late runner put in one of his better works ever in advance of the heat. While it's asking a lot of him to win the race without a proper recent prep for the tilt, if any runner can overcome the absence, it is him.

**#7 Knightsbridge (9-2)** has run a pair of fields off of their respective feet since stretching out to two turns and will be formidable with his best performance. Also conditioned by Mott, the five-year-old son of Nyquist bypassed a run in the Dirt Mile in favor of this event, and I see that as a major sign of confidence from his connections. He has recorded Brisnet Speed numbers of 119 and 111 in his two route outings to date and will be winging it early with Luis Saez inheriting the ride.

Forever Young toppled a field last year that might have been better than this one and had a fine prep run for the Classic when waltzing home in the Jockey Club Gold Cup (G1) at Belmont Park most recently. The Real Steel five-year-old has amassed more than a staggering $32 million in lifetime earnings; he always fires on U.S. soil, and the Japanese sensation could also sit a dream trip from slightly off of a fast early pace. He's a must-use.

Golden Tempo is a bit underappreciated for what he's accomplished in my opinion, and I expect the Cherie DeVaux trainee to give a fine account of himself in the Classic. The stone closer doesn't have the best running style to take down this formidable group, but he is consistently quite good late in his races and can surely grab a share inside the final furlong under Jose Ortiz. He has been working in very good fashion at his home base in Lexington, too.

# 2026 BREEDERS' CUP: TOP MATCHUPS IN CHAMPIONSHIP DIRT RACES

by James Scully

Let's preview exciting matchups in the 2026 Breeders' Cup dirt races. Pre-entries are out for the 43rd Breeders' Cup, which will take place Oct. 30-31 at Keeneland, and final fields will be revealed Monday. The 14-race schedule is split evenly between dirt and turf races.

### $7 MILLION CLASSIC (GI)

**Forever Young**: Japanese-based Forever Young always brings it, recording 12 wins, a second, and three thirds from 16 career starts while traveling all over the world the last three years, and his $32 million in career earnings includes a half-length triumph in the 2025 Classic at Del Mar. Freshened over the summer, Forever Young prepped for his title defense by recording a convincing victory in the Jockey Club Gold Cup (G1) in mid-September.

Sovereignty: After missing the 2025 Classic due to a minor issue, reigning Horse of the Year Sovereignty will look to complete a stellar career in glory. He stretches back to a favorable 1 1/4-mile trip, winning the Kentucky Derby (G1), Belmont (G1), and Travers (G1) in three previous attempts at the distance. Sovereignty placed in his first two starts back from a lengthy layoff this year, but the Bill Mott-trained colt enters the Classic off a sharp win in the Whitney (G1) at Saratoga.

### $2 MILLION SPRINT (G1)

**Englishman**: Established himself as one of the most exciting sprint prospects in years this summer at Saratoga, equaling a 48-year-old track record when spectacularly notching his first stakes win in June's Woody Stephens (G1), and Englishman validated the performance when romping in the H. Allen Jerkens Memorial (G1) in late August. The Cherie DeVaux-trained three-year-old colt possesses exceptional gate speed and Englishman promises to be a short price in the Sprint.

**T O Elvis**: Based in Japan, T O Elvis developed into a budding sprint star during the second half of last year, reeling off three consecutive stakes wins. The four-year-old put himself on the international map with a masterful triumph in the Churchill Downs (G1) on the Kentucky Derby undercard this spring, breaking the track record while defeating Knightsbridge and other notables at Churchill Downs. He runs well fresh, winning the Churchill Downs after a five-month rest, and T O Elvis returns from a six-month layoff in the Sprint.

### $2 MILLION DISTAFF (G1)

**Nitrogen**: Last year's champion two-year-old filly, Nitrogen will look to make amends after finishing second in last year's Distaff. And she looks poised for her best based upon the last three starts. The Mark Casse-trained filly just missed the track record, winning the Ogden Phipps (G1) by a dozen lengths and followed with a superb runner-up performance to Sovereignty in the Whitney (G1). Last out, Nitrogen made short work of overmatched rivals in the Beldame (G2) at Belmont Park, and she projects to be one of the shortest-priced favorites on Breeders' Cup Saturday.

**Fully Subscribed**: After finishing second in the first two starts back this year, Fully Subscribed stepped up with a trio of top-class performances to establish herself as a legitimate Distaff rival for Nitrogen. The chestnut four-year-old filly returned to the winner's circle with a fast performance in the Shuvee (G2) at Saratoga and then romped by nearly 10 lengths in the Personal Ensign (G1) on the Travers undercard. Chad Brown shipped her to Keeneland for her final prep in the Spinster (G1), and Fully Subscribed responded with another facile win. And her affinity for the 1 1/8-mile Distaff distance (7-5-2-0) is an advantage.

### $2 MILLION JUVENILE (G1)

**Hughes**: After romping in three starts at one turn, including the Del Mar Futurity (G1), Hughes moved to two turns with a career-best performance in the 1 1/16-mile American Pharoah (G1) at Santa Anita, easily registering the top last-out Brisnet Speed rating (108) in the Juvenile field and confirming himself as a serious Kentucky Derby prospect for Bob Baffert. The Hall of Fame trainer has a record six wins in the Juvenile, and Hughes has plenty going for him. The bay colt is by Into Mischief, who has sired three Kentucky Derby winners.

**American History**: After turning heads winning impressively first time out at Saratoga, American History showed courage getting up to win the Breeders' Futurity (G1) at Keeneland, rallying determinedly to edge odds-on favorite Coach Pope. The Breeders' Futurity has been an important prep, with all three previous Juvenile winners at Keeneland (2015, 2020, and 2022) sweeping both races, and American History is in good hands, as trainer Todd Pletcher has won three of the last four and five total editions of the Juvenile.

### $2 MILLION JUVENILE FILLIES (G1)

**Miss Monica**: An odds-on favorite in both starts, Miss Monica has smoked the competition each time, most recently romping by 6 1/4 lengths in the Del Mar Debutante (G1), and registered top-notch Brisnet Speed ratings. She's bred for the stretch out to two turns, being a daughter of ill-fated Preakness (G1) winner Early Voting and out of a mare by Triple Crown winner American Pharoah. After leading all the way in her career debut, Miss Monica showed versatility, rating just off the pace last time. She's trained by two-time Juvenile Fillies winner Bob Baffert.

**Emphatic**: An impressive debut maiden winner sprinting at Colonial Downs, Emphatic followed with a dominant frontrunning performance in the one-mile Sorority at Monmouth Park. She kept showing more in the Alcibiades (G1) at Keeneland, comfortably leading all the way, and the Brendan Walsh-trained daughter of Nyquist will bring speed to the Juvenile Fillies. Wonder Wheel turned the Alcibiades-Juvenile Fillies double in 2022, the last time Keeneland hosted the Breeders' Cup.

# MEET THE CONTENDERS

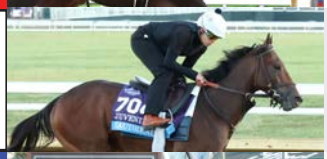
## BREEDERS' CUP JUVENILE

1

### DAMAVAND

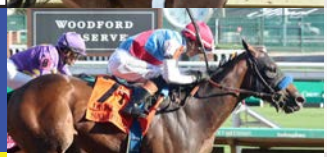
**PRO:** Pricey yearling buy proved better over this track and distance second out.
**CON:** Class hike from maiden company seems rather imposing.

2



### GAUDREAU - SCR

3



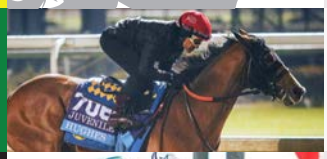
### SALAHUDIN

**PRO:** The other undefeated Baffert looks built to thrive going a distance.
**CON:** Off slow in Iroquois and had to work a bit to beat modest field.

4

### EARTH SONG - SCR

5



### HUGHES

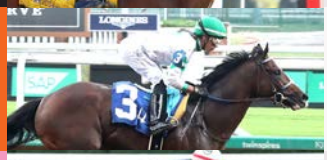
**PRO:** Sparkling all summer and fall in California; one to beat off latest.
**CON:** Barn lost 2022 Juvenile here with colt sharing similar profile.

6

### AMERICAN HISTORY

**PRO:** Got ideal setup in Breeders' Futurity (G1); local experience helps.
**CON:** Slow start last time nearly backfired; must break alertly.

7



### COACH POPE

**PRO:** Battle tested and held well last time after pressing pace.
**CON:** Declining figure pattern and possibly overbet on name alone.

8

### HE IS NO LIE

**PRO:** Aside from Best Pal (G3) flop, enters with consistent form.
**CON:** Has work to do to make amends against Baffert trainees.

# TWINSPIRES TIPSHEET

## 2026 BREEDERS' CUP JUVENILE

A fantastic field of eight two-year-olds will travel 1 1/16 miles over the main oval at Keeneland in Friday's $2 million Breeders' Cup Juvenile (G1). The 2027 Road to the Kentucky Derby challenge series tilt will reward the top-five finishers with qualifying points towards the Run for the Roses on a 30-15-9-6-3 scale.

| POST | HORSE | ML ODDS |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Damavand | 20-1 |
| 2 | ~~Gaudreau~~ | SCR |
| 3 | Salahudin | 6-1 |
| 4 | ~~Earth Song~~ | SCR |
| 5 | Hughes | 1-1 |
| 6 | American History | 9-2 |
| 7 | Coach Pope | 4-1 |
| 8 | He Is No Lie | 15-1 |

| TOP PICKS |
|---|
| #5 Hughes |
| #7 Coach Pope |
| #1 Damavand |

| WAGERS |
|---|
| $10 Exacta 5 with 1,7 |
| $5 Trifecta Key 5 with 1,7 |
| $1 Trifecta Box 1,5,7 |

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**#1 DAMAVAND (20-1)**: First of two from the Pletcher barn displayed a fine closing kick to graduate at Keeneland in his route bow, and I think he's an interesting exotics player at a price in the deep cast. The $1 million yearling purchase has plenty of room for improvement and will be saving ground throughout the heat with Luis Saez picking up the mount.

**#2 GADREAU (SCR)**: Louisiana-bred son of Nyquist finished first in a deep maiden race at Saratoga prior to checking in second behind U. S. S. Valor in the Champagne (G1) in his second outing. The January foal is a nice fit in the group and could be any kind over two turns on Friday for Chad Brown. Manny Franco will take the reins for the initial time.

**#3 SALAHUDIN (6-1)**: The first of a pair from the mighty Baffert barn hasn't done anything wrong, with a trio of wins from three runs leading up to his Keeneland debut, and earned a lifetime best Brisnet Speed rating in his first route try last time out. The $325,000 son of Uncle Mo has posted some swift morning moves lately and will do his best work from off the pace with Tyler Gaffalione riding.

**#4 EARTH SONG (SCR)**: Justify colt from the Delgado shedrow was fourth in the tough Champagne in his initial stakes try and is not impossible in the tilt. The $250,000 purchase was three lengths behind a major player in this race at Belmont last time and could get a piece with improvement in his two-turn debut. Junior Alvarado has the assignment.

**#5 HUGHES (1-1)**: Top pick and one to beat from the Baffert barn is unblemished and untested, with four superb scores to begin his career. The son of the sublime Into Mischief is the leader of the division and is proven to be capable of running well from up close or from off the pace, too. He will be formidable at his best under the guidance of Flavien Prat.

**#6 AMERICAN HISTORY (9-2)**: The unbeaten colt from the Pletcher barn followed up his debut score with a game victory in the Breeders' Futurity (G1) on this oval in his second start. The $825,000 son of Constitution has displayed a nice turn of foot in both career races to date and could be moving best of all late under John Velazquez.

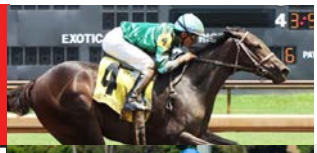
**#7 COACH POPE (4-1)**: Ultra-talented son of Tapit has run a trio of big races to commence his career, with a close second in the Breeders' Futurity (G1) in his latest venture. The Kenny McPeek trainee has two route races under his belt ahead of the tilt, and the local experience will only benefit the youngster. Jose Ortiz will retain the mount.

**#8 HE IS NO LIE (15-1)**: Sneaky contender from the O'Neill barn gets a tough slot on the outside of the cast, but the son of the late Early Voting ran well going long for the first time in advance of this heat, and the colt has the speed to avoid being left behind in the race, as well. The dark bay has posted four solid morning moves on the local surface as of late and will be forward throughout under Joel Rosario.

# MEET THE CONTENDERS

## BREEDERS' CUP JUVENILE FILLIES

1



### SCARLETT BEGONIA

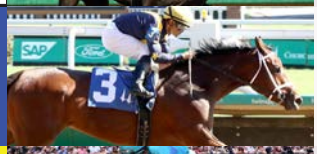
**PRO:** Change in tactics resulted in Pocahontas place honors.
**CON:** Needs big step forward for barn that's been cold here all month.

2

### DOMAN EXPANSION

**PRO:** Romped in Oak Leaf (G2) by seven as 14-1 outsider.
**CON:** Hard to argue there was much depth to that Santa Anita prep.

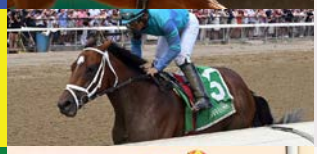
3



### FOXIEST

**PRO:** Terrific pedigree as she's by Gun Runner out of champion Covfefe.
**CON:** Plenty of upside but maiden win not especially fast.

4



### RUM TWIST

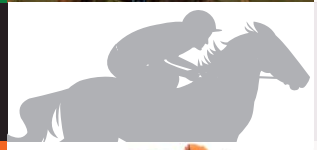
**PRO:** Switch to Lopez produced better form, including Frizette (G1) second.
**CON:** Speed figures seem relatively light.

5

### MISS MONICA

**PRO:** Cruised in Del Mar Debutante (G1) and purposely freshened for this.
**CON:** More value here than in California but still will be a short price.

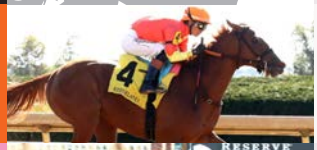
6



### REVENGE OF THE SIS

**PRO:** Dual stakes-placed and extra distance might help.
**CON:** Tough spot in which to try and break her maiden.

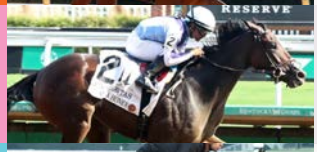
7



### LEXI'S CHARM

**PRO:** Bolted up to win local allowance by 12 lengths in fast time.
**CON:** Untested beyond six furlongs and class hike imposing.

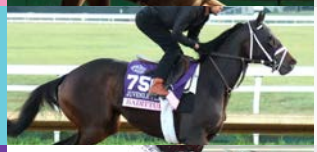
8



### MANUKA HONEY

**PRO:** Has done nothing wrong on this circuit, including two stakes wins.
**CON:** Took a bit to kick into gear last time and faces much tougher here.

9



### BADITTUDE

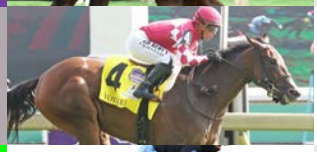
**PRO:** Connections have surprised before in a BC juvenile race.
**CON:** Much improved last time but hard to see maiden winning this.

10

### EMPHATIC

**PRO:** Probable favorite fended off Summer Starlet in Alcibiades (G1).
**CON:** Got away with slow pace last time; likely sees more pressure here.

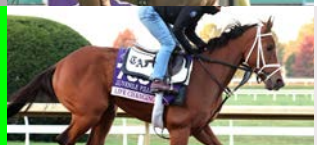
11



### VOYAGER

**PRO:** One of a trio of G1 winners here, hers coming in the Natalma (G1).
**CON:** Unbeaten on turf, but both dirt tries resulted in second-place finishes.

12



### LIFE CHANGING

**PRO:** If she can run back to her debut at Saratoga, she could surprise.
**CON:** Both stakes attempts leave much to be desired.



twinspires

# 2026 BREEDERS' CUP: UNDER-THE-RADAR CONTENDERS ON FRIDAY

by Keeler Johnson

Although there are a few strong favorites in Friday's Breeders' Cup races at Keeneland, the large fields in the grass races should give longshots a chance to factor into the results.

Even if favorites take home win honors, exotic wagers like the exacta and trifecta will pay nicely if a double-digit longshot finishes in the money.

Here are three under-the-radar contenders to consider betting on Breeders' Cup Friday:

**RACE 6: BREEDERS' CUP JUVENILE TURF SPRINT (G1): #13 Ruiva (12-1)**
If #13 Ruiva (12-1) draws in off the also-eligible list, she could challenge for trainer Wesley Ward, who has won the Juvenile Turf Sprint three times.

Ruiva has excellent early speed. Last time out, in the Indian Summer S. over the same course and distance as the Juvenile Turf Sprint, she set fractions of :21.15 and :44.37 before weakening in the final furlong to finish fourth by a neck.

If Ruiva rations her speed a bit better in the Juvenile Turf Sprint, there's a chance she could lead all the way and spring a double-digit upset.

**RACE 8: BREEDERS' CUP JUVENILE FILLIES TURF (G1): #7 Vanta (20-1)**
The favorites in the Juvenile Fillies Turf are formidable. #9 Sun Goddess (6-5) and #10 Amusingly (7-2) are Group 1-winning European raiders. #12 Domestic Agenda (8-1) is a talented American hopeful exiting a decisive win in the Miss Grillo (G2).

But don't leave #7 Vanta (20-1) off your tickets. The unbeaten filly has gone 3-for-3 in California and unleashed strong finishing kicks to win the Del Mar Juvenile Fillies Turf S. and Surfer Girl (G3). In the latter race, she clocked her final two furlongs in :11.24 and :11.21 per the Equibase GPS result chart. Her swift closing speed shouldn't be underestimated.

**RACE 10: BREEDERS' CUP JUVENILE TURF (G1): #11 Man's Best Friend (15-1)**
Aidan O'Brien, an eight-time Juvenile Turf winner, trains four horses in the 2026 edition. #11 Man's Best Friend (15-1) isn't the most accomplished of the quartet, but his form is nevertheless respectable.

Man's Best Friend has competed twice at the Group 1 level, finishing fourth in the Prix Morny (G1) and third in the Prix Jean-Luc Lagardere (G1). In the latter race, he finished only 1 3/4 lengths behind runner-up #10 Folsom Blues (7-2), one of the favorites in the Juvenile Turf.

Man's Best Friend has performed best over good and good-to-firm turf in Europe, so he should appreciate the firm turf he'll almost certainly encounter at Keeneland. A small step forward can put him in the hunt for victory.

Good luck!

# HOW TO BET THE 2026 BREEDERS' CUP JUVENILE TURF

by Keeler Johnson

A remarkably competitive field will contest Friday's $1 million Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf (G1) at Keeneland.

The race has drawn a full field of 14 plus one also-eligible entrant. Separating the contenders isn't easy, but it's likely trainer Aidan O'Brien—an eight-time winner of the Juvenile Turf—will be involved at the finish with one or more of his four entrants: #3 Florida Bay (20-1), #4 Haffner (8-1), #11 Man's Best Friend (15-1), and #14 Great Barrier Reef (4-1).

**WAGERS**

- 50-cent Superfecta: 11,14 with 11,14 with 3,4,5,10 with 3,4,5,10 ($12)
- 50-cent Superfecta: 11,14 with 3,4,5,10 with 11,14 with 3,4,5,10 ($12)
- 50-cent Superfecta: 11,14 with 3,4,5,10 with 3,4,5,10 with 11,14 ($12)

**Total: $36**

All four of the O'Brien trainees have won at the group stakes level, and three have shown promise against Group 1 competition. Florida Bay finished third in the Vincent O'Brien National (G1), Haffner exits a win in the Royal Lodge (G2), Man's Best Friend ran third in the Prix Jean-Luc Lagardere (G1), and Great Barrier Reef finished third in the Dewhurst (G1).

Their accomplishments are notable. Five of O'Brien's eight Juvenile Turf winners had previously placed in a Group 1 race, and three had previously won a group stakes. O'Brien's 2026 Juvenile Turf entrants stack up well against their predecessors in terms of accomplishments, and any one of them could factor for a top-four finish at Keeneland.

So why not play a superfecta and bet them all in some capacity? Of the quartet, we prefer Man's Best Friend and Great Barrier Reef. Man's Best Friend has done well competing on good and good-to-firm turf in Europe, suggesting he'll appreciate firm ground at Keeneland. Great Barrier Reef hasn't missed the trifecta in three starts and is slated to be ridden by O'Brien's top jockey, Ryan Moore.

We'll build our superfecta tickets around Man's Best Friend and Great Barrier Reef, counting on one to win and the other to finish in the top four. For the remaining slots, we'll use Florida Bay and Haffner alongside Vincent O'Brien National winner #10 Folsom Blues (7-2) and Kentucky Downs Juvenile Mile S. conqueror #5 How's Al Today (3-1). Folsom Blues has beaten Man's Best Friend, Florida Bay, and Haffner in recent starts and conquered the Vincent O'Brien National by six lengths.

How's Al Today is the morning-line favorite. In the Kentucky Downs Juvenile Mile, he won by 4 1/2 lengths over a field containing next-out Street Sense (G3) winner Jas and next-out Bourbon (G2) hero #13 Agate (10-1).

Good luck!

# HOW TO BET THE 2026 BREEDERS' CUP JUVENILE FILLIES

by Keeler Johnson

Although a dozen fillies have entered Friday's $2 million Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies (G1) at Keeneland, #10 Emphatic (9-5) looms as a formidable favorite.

Emphatic exits an impressive Alcibiades (G1) victory over the same track and distance as the Juvenile Fillies. A similar Breeders' Cup performance should make Emphatic difficult to defeat.

**WAGERS**

- $10 Exacta: 10 with 2
- $4 Trifecta: 10 with 2 with 5,11 ($8)
- $6 Trifecta: 10 with 5,11 with 2 ($12)

**Total: $30**

After opening her career with decisive wins in a Colonial Downs maiden special weight and the one-mile Sorority S., Emphatic stepped up in class and distance for the 1 1/16-mile Alcibiades. She secured the lead, carved out a modest pace, and then finished strongly (running her final five-sixteenths of a mile in :30.91) to beat Spinaway (G1) winner Summer Starlet by 1 1/4 lengths.

Emphatic reached the finish line in the sharp time of 1:43.40 and earned a promising 97 Brisnet Speed rating. She also earned a 104 Brisnet Late Pace rating, the highest number belonging to any filly in Friday's field.

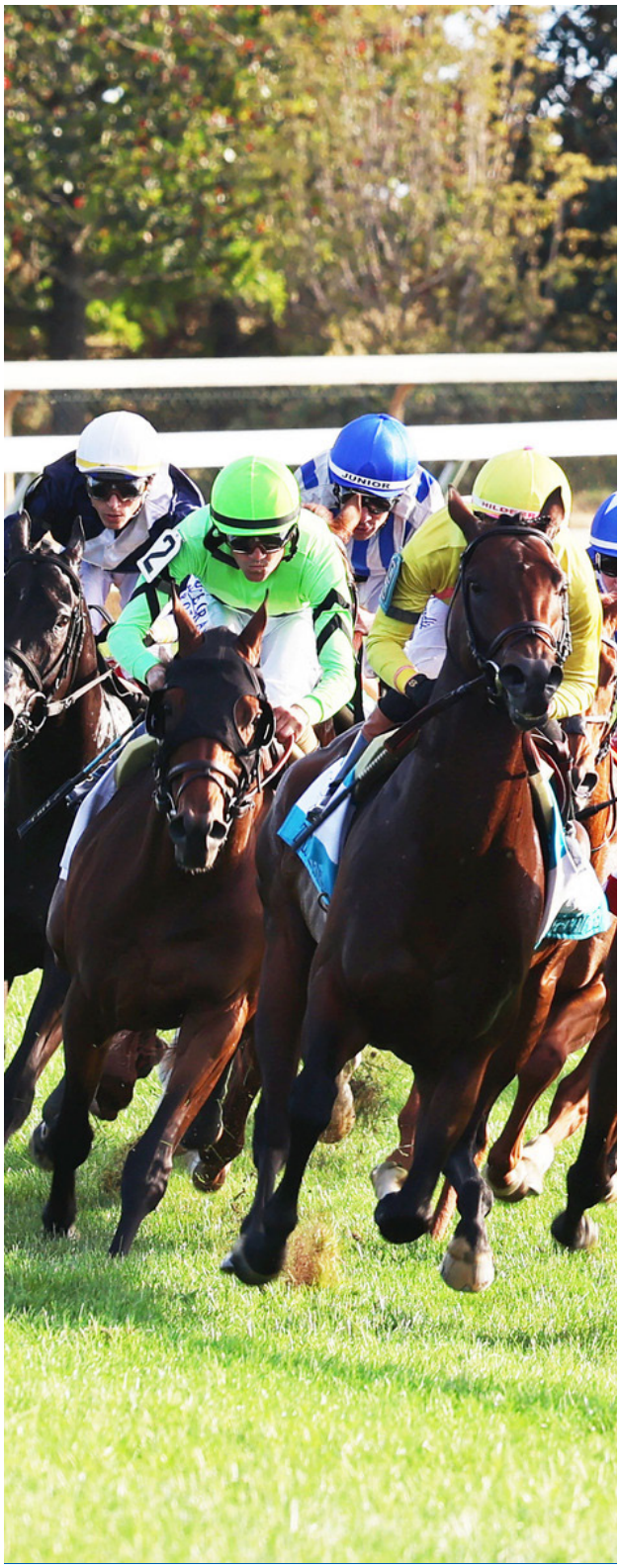
Some bettors may worry that Emphatic will face a faster pace in the Juvenile Fillies. But there are reasons to believe she'll handle a quicker tempo without difficulty. She isn't a need-the-lead type; in the Sorority, she closed from fourth place, two lengths off the early lead. If a fast pace unfolds in the Juvenile Fillies, Emphatic can settle behind the leaders before using her strong finishing speed to take command in the homestretch.

We recommend keying Emphatic on top of exacta and trifecta wagers, emphasizing #2 Domain Expansion (6-1) underneath. Domain Expansion ran into traffic trouble when finishing second in her debut on turf. Then she switched to dirt and obliterated the 1 1/16-mile Oak Leaf (G2) at Santa Anita by seven lengths, earning a 99 Brisnet Speed rating. Domain Expansion made a great visual impression and looks like a promising filly.

We'll round out our tickets with #5 Miss Monica (5-2) and #11 Voyager (12-1).

Miss Monica boasts a 2-for-2 record and is stretching out in distance off a 6 1/4-length triumph in the seven-furlong Del Mar Debutante (G1). Voyager won the one-mile Natalma (G1) on turf, but has also shown ability sprinting on dirt. Running long on dirt may suit the daughter of Justify just fine.

Good luck!



# BETTING WITH, AND AGAINST, SUN GODDESS IN THE BREEDERS' CUP JUVENILE FILLIES TURF

by John Mucciolo

An overflow cast of 17 two-year-old fillies has been entered for Friday's $1 million Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf (G1) at Keeneland. The 1 1/16-mile lawn affair is led by the imposing #9 Sun Goddess (6-5) for conditioner Aidan O'Brien.

**SUN GODDESS – WITH**

- $1 Superfecta: 9 with 1,10,12 with 1,10,12 with ALL ($66)

**SUN GODDESS – AGAINST**

- 50-cent Trifecta: 1,10,12 with 1,9,10,12 with ALL ($54)
- $2 Exacta: box 1,10,12 ($12)

By Sioux Nation, the Sun Goddess has been fantastic this campaign, compiling an 8-6-2-0 mark, led by strong victories in the Phoenix (G1), Moyglare Stud (G1), and most recently, the Cheveley Park (G1) at Newmarket. The exquisite bay has never run past seven-eighths in her lifetime, but her connections are confident this voyage is well within her scope, and she will be difficult to upend if she has clear sailing in the heat with regular rider Ryan Moore in the stirrups.

French import #10 Amusingly (7-2) is a neck shy of being unbeaten in her three-race career and rates as a major conender in her U. S. debut. The Juddmonte homebred from the superb Graffard shedrow made pretty easy work of her foes in the Jean-Luc Lagardere (G1) at Longchamp last time, and the daughter of No Nay Never gives the impression of a filly that will thrive with the added ground on Saturday. Colin Keane will guide the February foal.

Chad Brown's #12 Domestic Agenda (8-1) might be the best of the fillies based in North America, and I feel that she will be a major contender with any improvement in her Keeneland unveiling. The American Pharoah chestnut was a bit green in her debut tally at Saratoga, but she looked like a pro second time out when crushing her foes in the Miss Grillo (G2) at Belmont Park on Oct. 3. She could be a star in the making and will have Flavien Prat on board.

Group 1 victress #1 Green Empress (10-1) has had no luck trying to take down Sun Goddess this season, but the Joseph O'Brien pupil has been first or second in every lifetime run to date and can't be ignored in her U. S. debut. The Saxon Warrior filly will be a threat in the lane if she can navigate a good trip from the rail in the huge field under Dylan McMonagle.

# TWINSPIRES TIPSHEET

## 2026 BREEDERS' CUP CLASSIC

A superb field of eight will travel 1 1/4 miles over the Keeneland dirt in Saturday's lucrative, $7 million Breeders' Cup Classic (G1).

| POST | HORSE | ML ODDS |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | T O Password (JPN) | 30-1 |
| 2 | Sovereignty | 5-2 |
| 3 | Golden Tempo | 5-1 |
| 4 | Puma | 10-1 |
| 5 | Forever Young (JPN) | 2-1 |
| 6 | Magnitude | 6-1 |
| 7 | Knightsbridge | 9-2 |
| 8 | Napoleon Solo | 15-1 |

| TOP PICKS |
|---|
| #2 Sovereignty |
| #7 Knightsbridge |
| #5 Forever Young |
| #3 Golden Tempo |

| WAGERS |
|---|
| $40 win #2 Sovereignty |
| $10 exacta key box 2 with 5,7 |
| 50-cent superfecta 2,7 with 2,3,5,7 with 2,3,5,7 with |

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**#1 T O PASSWORD (30-1):** The first of two Japanese-based contenders in the heat gets the rail for his first try in the U. S. since finishing a sneaky-good fifth in the 2024 Kentucky Derby (G1) following a poor break. Trained by Daisuke Takayanagi, the five-year-old son of Copano Rickey has good form coming into the contest and might relish the return to 1 1/4 miles on Saturday. Kazushi Kimura picks up the mount.

**#2 SOVEREIGNTY (5-2):** Standout four-year-old was the best version of himself when dusting a fantastic field in the Whitney (G1) at Saratoga on Aug. 8. The first of two formidable foes for trainer Bill Mott, the Godolphin homebred is three-for-three at 1 1/4 miles, and his connections reported that his most recent morning activity might have been his best ever. The top choice will inch clear inside the final furlong with regular pilot Junior Alvarado back in the saddle.

**#3 GOLDEN TEMPO (5-1):** Leading sophomore is a superb late runner who comes in fresh, hoping to cap off a stellar season for trainer Cherie DeVaux. The Curlin homebred, who bagged the Kentucky Derby and Belmont (G1) earlier this season, hasn't raced since August but has trained in fine fashion on this oval leading up to his toughest test to date, and he will arrive on the scene late under Jose Ortiz.

**#4 THE PUMA (10-1):** The second of three sophomores in the group earned a much-deserved Grade 1 tally when annexing the Pennsylvania Derby (G1) in his first try with blinkers on last time out. Trained by Gustavo Delgado, the chestnut son of Essential Quality has never run a bad race and checked in a solid fourth in his lone prior attempt at 10 furlongs. His preparation for the tilt has been positive, and the Kentucky-bred will do his best work late with Javier Castellano staying in the irons.

**#5 FOREVER YOUNG (2-1):** Global superstar is the defending champ in the event and prepped for title defense with a facile victory in the Jockey Club Gold Cup (G1) at Belmont Park on Sept. 18. The Yoshito Yahagi pupil is a $32 million earner who always shows up and has reportedly been working in excellent fashion leading up to his historic try. The versatile son of Real Steel will likely be in the second flight in the early stages of the event, with regular rider Sakai in the silks.

**#6 MAGNITUDE (6-1):** Reigning Dubai World Cup (G1) star is fantastic on his best day and can't be ignored for trainer Steve Asmussen. The four-year-old has defeated both morning-line choices in the field, Forever Young and Sovereignty, in 2026 and is flying under the radar for his local debut. Flavien Prat picks up the mount atop the colt and will have him forcing the action from the opening bell.

**#7 KNIGHTSBRIDGE (9-2):** Major win contender has thrived since moving to route racing in his last two tilts and was last seen dominating his foes with a sublime showing in the Pacific Classic (G1) at Del Mar most recently. Trained by Bill Mott, the Nyquist homebred has blazing early speed and has trained swiftly leading up to his second run on the surface as well. The five-year-old Godolphin homebred will be difficult to reel in with his best performance under regular jockey Junior Alvarado.

**#8 NAPOLEON SOLO (15-1):** Ultra-talented sophomore answered the 10-furlong question last time when running a big second in the Travers (G1) at Saratoga, and he gets the outside slot for his first run with his elders. The Chad Summers pupil has improved his Brisnet Speed rating in a trio of races in succession, and the son of Liam's Map continues to impress in a big way with his powerful, fleet morning works. John Velazquez will ride and put the sophomore into the race soon after the break.

# TWINSPIRES TIPSHEET

## 2026 BREEDERS' CUP TURF

A world-class cast will travel 1 1/2 miles over the Keeneland grass in Saturday's highly anticipated, $5 million Breeders' Cup Turf (G1), the penultimate race during the electric Championship weekend in Lexington.

| POST | HORSE | ML ODDS |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Ethical Diamond | 10-1 |
| 2 | Benvenuto Cellin (IRE) | 6-1 |
| 3 | Minaret Station | 15-1 |
| 4 | Far Bridge | 20-1 |
| 5 | El Cordobes (IRE) | 15-1 |
| 6 | Burnham Square | 8-1 |
| 7 | Hotazhell | 15-1 |
| 8 | ~~Test Score~~ | SCR |
| 9 | Johanna Walsh (IRE) | 12-1 |
| 10 | Tiffany | 10-1 |
| 11 | Survie | 15-1 |
| 12 | Diamond Necklace (IRE) | 3-1 |
| 13 | Bay City Rolle (IRE) | 5-1 |
| 14 | Deep Monster (JPN) | 30-1 |
| 15 | AE Map of Stars (GB) | 20-1 |
| 16 | AE Telescopic | 30-1 |

| TOP PICKS |
|---|
| #10 Tiffany |
| #2 Benvenuto Cellini |
| #12 Diamond Necklace |
| #13 Bay City Roller |

| WAGERS |
|---|
| $20 win and place #10 Tiffany |
| $2 exacta box 2,10,12,13 |
| 50-cent trifecta: 10 with 2,12,13 with all |

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**#1 ETHICAL DIAMOND (10-1):** Defending champ gets the rail after breaking from the outside post at Del Mar last season and has to be given a lot of respect on this occasion. The Willy Mullins charge has good form coming in for his title defense, and his runner-up showing in the Turf Cup (G2) at Kentucky Downs last time will set him up well for a big run at Keeneland. Dylan McMonagle, who guided him home in 2025, has the call.

**#2 BENVENUTO CELLINI (6-1):** Irish Derby (G1) star from the O'Brien shedrow hasn't been at his best over soft going in two straight but wouldn't be a surprise in this superb field in his U. S. debut. The Frankel colt has a nice slot near the fence for his stateside bow and will be a menace at the top of the lane under Ryan Moore.

**#3 MINARET STATION (15-1):** Will Walden trainee is consistently very good and was last seen capturing the Joe Hirsch (G1) at Belmont Park in his latest showing. The four-year-old son of Instagrand has handled the move to 1 1/2 miles with ease as of late, but he will need a major step forward in order to take down this sensational cast. Jose Ortiz will retain the mount.

**#4 FAR BRIDGE (20-1):** Grade 1 hero rallied to be a clear second in the Joe Hirsch last time and will make his Keeneland debut for Clement. The English Channel six-year-old has the early foot to be close from the break, but he appears to be a cut below the big guns in this particular contest. John Velazquez will take the reins.

**#5 EL CORDOBES (15-1):** Frankel gelding checked in third in the 2025 edition and wouldn't be a total surprise with a similar kind of finish in this year's renewal. The Charlie Appleby pupil had a solid prep for this at Belmont last time off the long layoff, and he will move forward second off the shelf with William Buick in for the voyage.

**#6 BURNHAM SQUARE (8-1):** Arlington Million (G1) star from the Ian Wilkes barn ran one of the best races of his career when smashing his foes in the Elkhorn (G2) on the course in spring, and gets a long look at a fair price in this spot. The Liam's Map four-year-old didn't fire at Kentucky Downs last time, but he's been pointed for this race for some time and will show marked improvement on Saturday. Regular jockey Brian Hernandez, Jr., will be up.

**#7 HOTAZHELL (15-1):** Multiple Group 1 star from Jessica Harrington's barn upset a fine cast in the Champion (G1) at Leopardstown last time out and can't be ignored at a good price. The four-year-old son of Too Darn Hot isn't especially consistent, but he is quite good on his best day and also comes in with good current form. Regular pilot Shane Foley has the assignment.

**#8 TEST SCORE (SCR):** Two-time Grade 1 star from the always-dangerous Motion barn defeated a solid cast at Del Mar last time and will make his 1 1/2-mile debut on this day. The talented son of Lookin at Lucky has a lot of ability, but this seems like an ambitious spot for the four-year-old colt. Manny Franco will take the reins.

**#9 JOHANNA WALSH (12-1):** Sophomore filly from the barn of Joseph O'Brien dusted her foes in the Irish Oaks (G1) two back prior to finishing unplaced in her latest outing. The Sea the Stars three-year-old faces both her elders and males in this spot, and she will need a lifetime best run to make the frame against this crew. Mickael Barzalona will be on board.

**#10 TIFFANY (10-1):** Top pick made short work of a very good turf group at Kentucky Downs leading up to this race and figures to improve second time on U. S. grass. The six-year-old mare has finished first or second in 16 of 19 lifetime runs to date, and the Group 1 victress has been well managed throughout her career. Luke Morris will pilot the Sir Mark Prescott pupil.

**#11 SURVIE (15-1):** Churchill mare made a fine impression at Saratoga in the summer with a pair of stylish wins and will hope to continue her luck in North America in this spot. The George Boughey trainee is essentially a one-run closer with a fine late burst, and she will be reunited with Flavien Prat for her first run at Keeneland.

**#12 DIAMOND NECKLACE (3-1):** Classy filly from the O'Brien barn has been defeated in her last two races following a six-race winning streak to commence her career, but she proved her class when third in the Arc de Triomphe (G1) at Longchamp last time out. The bay daughter of St. Mark's Basilica is among the better horses in all of Europe and could surely start a new winning streak with a top showing on Saturday. Christophe Soumillon keeps the ride.

**#13 BAY CITY ROLLER (5-1):** Multiple Group 1 hero comes back on short rest after finishing third in the Champion (G1) at Royal Ascot but will be a major player with his best for trainer George Scott. The New Bay colt, who finished second in the Arc de Triomphe (G1) two prior, will be in the mix late with Oisin Murphy in the stirrups.

**#14 DEEP MONSTER (30-1):** Multiple Group 2 victor will make his first run in the states in the heat and must overcome the widest post in the field. The eight-year-old son of Deep Impact has been a high-level performer in 2026 ahead of Saturday, and if he can navigate a sensible voyage, then the dark bay could grab a share late with Tom Marquand in the stirrups.

**#15 MAP OF STARS (20-1) (Also-Eligible):** Graffard pupil is first on the also-eligible list and will need a defection to make the race. Group 2 victor has plenty of back class, and it's hard to discount anything from this sublime barn. The gelded son of Sea the Stars will have James Doyle in the controls once again.

**#16 TELESCOPIC (30-1) (Also-Eligible):** Vicki Oliver trainee is in nice current form, coming in with a pair of allowance tallies in succession, but the American Pharoah gelding faces an imposing group in here and can't be endorsed if the chestnut draws into the field.

# TWINSPIRES TIPSHEET

## 2026 BREEDERS' CUP MILE

The grassy, $2 million Breeders' Cup Mile (G1) at Del Mar is truly an international event this year, as domestic runners will be joined by contenders with roots in Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America. Three-year-olds have had success numerous times in the past, and I look for the sophomores to have a major say in the outcome of the tilt once again.

| POST | HORSE | ML ODDS |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Deterministic | 8-1 |
| 2 | Lake Forest | 6-1 |
| 3 | Facteur Cheval | 30-1 |
| 4 | Cabo Spirit | 30-1 |
| 5 | Ask Ikigomi | 20-1 |
| 7 | Qirat | 30-1 |
| 8 | Notable Speech | 7-5 |
| 9 | Rhetorical | 8-1 |
| 10 | Lugal (JPN) | 30-1 |
| 11 | Formidable Man | 15-1 |
| 12 | True Love | 8-1 |
| 13 | Brilliant Birti | 30-1 |
| 14 | Puerto Rico | 10-1 |
| 15 | Vina Arana (IRE) | 30-1 |

| TOP PICKS |
|---|
| #8 Notable Speech |
| #11 Formidable Man |
| #1 Deterministic |
| #2 Lake Forest |
| #14 Puerto Rico |

| WAGERS |
|---|
| $6 exacta key box 8 with 1,2,11,14 |
| 50-cent superfecta 8 with 1,2,11,14 with 1,2,11,14 with all |

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**#1 DETERMINISTIC (8-1):** Miguel Clement trainee has been consistently excellent over the past two seasons and will be a forward presence from the start from the fence in the tilt. The four-time Grade 1 victor had a strong prep for the contest, when second in the Woodbine Mile (G1), and rates as an obvious winning chance under regular pilot Kendrick Carmouche.

**#2 LAKE FOREST (6-1):** Group 2 star can be very good on his best day and looms as an upset contender for trainer William Haggas. The No Nay Never gelding tuned up for the Mile with a rallying second in the Turf Mile (G1) here on Oct. 3 and will get more honest fractions to run at late on Saturday. Cieren Fallon stays in the silks.

**#3 FACTEUR CHEVAL (30-1):** $5.7 million earner hasn't been in his best form over the past two campaigns, but the seven-year-old has a world of back class and could surprise with a top-three finish under Manny Franco. Now in the hands of Mark Casse, the Ribchester gelding prepped for the contest with an allowance tally at Keeneland last time out and will be doing his best work late at a big price.

**#4 CABO SPIRIT (30-1):** California invader is the pace of the race and led all the way in the City of Hope Mile (G2) at Santa Anita most recently. The George Papaprodromou pupil will likely face early pressure in the tilt, and he would be a big surprise to be in the hunt late against this group beneath Mike Smith.

**#5 ASK IKIGOMI (20-1):** Lord Kanaloa three-year-old is a nose shy of being unbeaten from a trio of career outings to date, and the lightly raced sophomore will face his elders after a long absence in this spot. The Fujiwara trainee is a wildcard in the cast, and I will watch the wagering on the colt before making a final decision in his first run with older foes. Ryusei Sakai will be in the irons.

**#7 QIRAT (30-1):** Juddmonte homebred was outrun in the race last season but comes in with fine form, led by a strong Group 2 score at Longchamp in his latest venture. The Showcasing gelding will move forward if he gets soft ground on Saturday with Colin Keane in the stirrups.

**#8 NOTABLE SPEECH (7-5):** Godolphin homebred was an eye-popping winner of the race in 2025 and gets the nod to make it two in succession for trainer Charles Appleby. The Dubawi five-year-old was a powerful winner of the Woodbine Mile last time and landed in a field with a lot of pace signed on to aid his substantial late burst, too. William Buick retains the mount atop the leading choice.

**#9 RHETORICAL (8-1):** William Walden pupil loves the course and comes off a facile tally in the Turf Mile (G1) where he led throughout. The Not This Time New York-bred finished a positive fourth in the race last year and will be well placed turning for home on Saturday with Jose Ortiz in the silks.

**#10 LUGAL (30-1):** An interesting invader from the Sugiyama barn has put in a few major efforts while sprinting on the green and will run one mile for the first time against this group. The six-year-old son of Duramente is hard to get a read on, but he is obviously quite talented and wouldn't be a total shock to make the frame beneath Oisin Murphy.

**#11 FORMIDABLE MAN (15-1):** Michael McCarthy's charge was second in the contest in 2025, and I like his chance to fill out the exacta once again despite the outside draw under John Velazquez. The City of Light five-year-old didn't thrive over the Kentucky Downs green last time out, but he is an excellent miler on flat courses, and his versatility will come in handy breaking from the outer post in his local debut. John Velazquez, who piloted the bay in the tilt last season, will be on board.

**#12 TRUE LOVE (8-1):** Multiple Group 1 vixen got back to her winning ways with a game tally in the Prix la Foret at Longchamp and has exotics appeal with any improvement off of that victory. The No Nay Never filly can be especially good on her best day and fits well in this spot with Wayne Lordan picking up the mount.

**#13 BRILLIANT BERTI (30-1):** Outsider from the DeVaux shedrow has won just three of his last 13 starts and would be a major surprise in the deep field with Brian Hernandez, Jr. signed on.

**#14 PUERTO RICO (10-1)**: Second in the group for Aidan O'Brien, the Wootton Bassett colt has yet to carry his superb juvenile form into 2026, but ran big at Longchamp last time and has appeal despite drawing widest of all. The dual Group 1 winner has faced off with fantastic foes this campaign; intriguingly, Ryan Moore lands on the three-year-old colt in the tilt.

**#15 VINA ARANA (30-1) (Also-Eligible):** Grade 2 heroine has never faced the boys and looks a cut below the best in this field for Sisterson.

**#6 Zulu Kingdom** is scratched.

# TWINSPIRES TIPSHEET

## 2026 BREEDERS' CUP DISTAFF

A superb cast of nine fillies and mares, seven of them Grade 1 heroines, will run 1 1/8 miles over the main strip at Keeneland in Saturday's $2 million Breeders' Cup Distaff (G1).

| POST | HORSE | ML ODDS |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Immersive | 30-1 |
| 2 | Nitrogen | 6-5 |
| 3 | Regaled | 20-1 |
| 4 | Fully Subscribed | 8-5 |
| 5 | Scottish Lassi | SCR |
| 6 | Measure | 20-1 |
| 7 | Super Corredora | 15-1 |
| 8 | Splendora | 9-2 |
| 9 | Eunomia | 30-1 |

| TOP PICKS |
|---|
| #4 Fully Subscribed |
| #2 Nitrogen |
| #8 Splendora |
| #6 Measure |

| WAGERS |
|---|
| $20 exacta: 4 with 2,8 |
| $1 superfecta: 4 with 2,8 with 2,6,8 with ALL |

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**#1 IMMERSIVE (30-1)**: Godolphin homebred is a Grade 1 winner on the oval and draws inside for trainer Brad Cox. The Nyquist four-year-old has been outrun by a few of her foes in this field as of late, and she will need a major step forward to challenge this deep cast with Junior Alvarado in the silks.

**#2 NITROGEN (6-5):** Superstar from the barn of Mark Casse was second in the event in 2025 and will look to go one better on Saturday. The daughter of Medaglia d'Oro comes off a facile score in the Beldame (G2) at Belmont Park, and the filly will be formidable if she puts forth her top performance. Regular rider Jose Ortiz has the call.

**#3 REGALED (20-1):** Whit Beckman pupil repeated in the Delaware (G3) in her latest venture and will be a late presence if the speed backs up in the stretch in the affair. The Mohaymen five-year-old rallied to be a nice third in the event last campaign and is surely one to consider for the vertical exotics beneath Joseph Ramos.

**#4 FULLY SUBSCRIBED (8-5):** Chad Brown trainee is consistently excellent and was last seen strolling home to a convincing tally in the Spinster (G1) on the surface. The Tiz the Law chestnut has won or placed in each of her 10 lifetime tries, and she also boasts a fine five-for-seven mark at nine furlongs. She drilled a bullet five-eighths leading up to the tilt and will have Flavien Prat on board once again.

**#5 SCOTTISH LASSIE (SCR):** Two-time Grade 1 victress has been outfinished by the top pick in her last two tries, but the Abreu pupil comes in fresh with some solid morning moves and longshot appeal to me. The daughter of McKinzie has earned some of her top Brisnet Speed ratings at nine panels, and I expect her to outrun her odds on Saturday with Luis Saez taking the reins.

**#6 MEASURE (20-1):** Second from the Casse shedrow has earned Grade-1 placings in three straight contests and will face her elders in this endeavor. The Essential Quality filly has earned a triple-digit Brisnet Late Pace rating in two straight, and in a field where the pace will be swift and contested, the sophomore could sit a great trip from well off the tempo early on. Manny Franco stays in the silks.

**#7 SUPER CORREDORA (15-1):** Reigning Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies (G1) starlet looked like her old self in an easy score in the Zenyatta (G2) on Sept. 27 and will be part of the early pace on Saturday in her second run off the long layoff. The Gun Runner three-year-old will still need a career-best showing to upset this accomplished field for John Sadler.

**#8 SPLENDORA (9-2):** Baffert trainee romped home in the Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Sprint (G1) in 2025 and will aim to add a second second Cup victory to her resume. The classy Audible five-year-old has dominated a trio of fields in succession, and she has won eight of her last nine races by a combined 34 3/4 lengths. Tyler Gaffalione inherits the mount atop the prime win candidate.

**#9 EUNOMIA (30-1):** Clement Hirsch (G1) vixen does her best work going two turns and also sports a 3-2-1-0 mark on the Keeneland dirt. Trained by Saffie Joseph Jr., the Tiz the Law four-year-old was assigned the widest post in the field, which will be challenging to overcome, and while I like the bay a lot in general, this spot could prove to be too tough for her with Micah Husbands riding.

# 2026 BREEDERS' CUP CLASSIC: BRISNET SPEED RATING REPORT

by James Scully

The $7 million Breeders' Cup Classic (G1) is the defining event of the 14-race, two-day Breeders' Cup program, and Keeneland has featured two of the best winners: American Pharoah and Flightline. The Lexington, Ky. track will host the Classic for the fourth time this weekend and has attracted a sensational matchup between international superstar Forever Young and reigning Horse of the Year Sovereignty.

The eight-horse field features additional depth. Two notable elders, Stephen Foster (G1) and Dubai World Cup (G1) winner Magnitude and Pacific Classic (G1) romper Knightsbridge, are signed on. And presumptive three-year-old male champion, Kentucky Derby (G1) and Belmont (G1) winner Golden Tempo, brings a serious late kick to the 1 1/4-mile race.

Let's review the Brisnet Speed ratings for 2026 Classic contenders, listing the field in order of top last-out number.

## ANALYSIS

**Forever Young (112)** will make his third consecutive Classic appearance, winning last year's edition at Del Mar by a half-length. The five-year-old's credentials are imposing, registering 112, 115, and 111 Brisnet Speed ratings in the last three American starts, and Forever Young has bankrolled more than $32 million while winning 12 of 16 career starts, never finishing out of the money. The Classic will be his second start back from a layoff, prepping with a convincing win in the Sept. 18 Jockey Club Gold Cup (G1) at Belmont Park, and the stalker has the tractability to make his own trip.

**Knightsbridge (111)** owns the top Speed rating in the Classic, netting a 119, winning the Monmouth Cup (G3) by 10 lengths two starts back, and the dark bay impressively dominated the 1 1/4-mile Pacific Classic by 6 1/2 lengths last time out. A middle-distance specialist until stretching out for the Monmouth Cup, Knightsbridge has evolved as a five-year-old and is fast enough to win based on numbers, but he will be tested for class after defeating less-than-distinguished rivals in the last two starts.

**Sovereignty (110)** was forced to miss the 2025 Classic due to a reported fever. The four-year-old will stretch back to his favorite distance, earning 103-111-112 figures, winning the Kentucky Derby, Belmont, and Travers (G1) at 10 furlongs last year, following a sharp score in the Whitney (G1) at Saratoga, but Sovereignty did miss a scheduled prep in the Jockey Club Gold Cup and trained in a bar shoe before being confirmed for the Classic. He's healthy now for two-time Classic winner Bill Mott, working well at Keeneland in preparation, and Sovereignty looms as a formidable presence.

**Napoleon Solo (106)** earned his biggest win in the Preakness (G1) three starts back but netted only a 95 Speed rating. The three-year-old gray speedster has run faster in his last two outings, registering encouraging 104 and 106 Speed ratings, finishing second respectively in the Haskell (G1) and Travers (G1), but his threshold for the 1 1/4-mile trip was called into question when he coughed up a clear lead in the deep stretch of the latter. Under consideration for the Dirt Mile (G1), Napoleon Solo earned a shot at the Classic by training forwardly in preparation and promises to add early speed to the equation.

**The Puma (105)** made his career debut in mid-January, breaking his maiden in the Tampa Bay Derby (G3) the third time out, and stamped his Kentucky Derby ticket finishing a nose second in the Florida Derby (G1). But he was forced to miss the Triple Crown due to a minor physical issue, returning with a troubled fourth in the Haskell (G1) and didn't experience a good trip filling the same position in the Travers. Trainer Gustavo Delgado added blinkers for the Sept. 19 Pennsylvania Derby (G1), and The Puma responded with a career-best performance, recording a half-length victory over the fast-closing Further Ado. The improving three-year-old brings Brisnet Late Pace ratings of 114 and 117 to the equation, along with rising Speed ratings, and blinkers appear to have moved him up. The Puma must keep showing more in his first start against elders, but rates as intriguing based on numbers.

**Golden Tempo (104)** projects to receive the proper setup for his strong late kick, with a trio of possible early speed types entered, and he's based at Keeneland, training forwardly in preparation for his Kentucky Derby upset and in recent drills for the Classic. The Cherie DeVaux-trained colt failed to register a triple-digit Speed rating while winning two legs of the Triple Crown, but Golden Tempo received encouraging triple-digit Speed and Late Pace numbers in his last outing and may be primed for a career-best from off the pace in the Classic.

**Magnitude (92)** has been freshened since early August and will seek to rebound after failing to fire in the Whitney (G1), weakening to sixth as the favorite. I am willing to draw a line through that effort – the four-year-old did not run well at Saratoga last year – and while there's no guarantee the Steve Asmussen-trained colt will return to top form, Magnitude's stellar win in the Stephen Foster (G1) two back, receiving a 110 Speed rating, leaving Sovereignty and other notable rivals in his wake, makes him a worthy win candidate. Magnitude defeated Forever Young in the Dubai World Cup three-back, notching his first win at the Classic distance, and has the tactical ability to lead or rate just off the early action. He needed a new jockey after Jose Ortiz opted to stick with Golden Tempo, adding the services of Flavien Prat, who has captured two of the last four Classics, including the 2022 edition aboard Flightline at Keeneland.

**T O Password (n/a)** has competed exclusively in Japan since shipping in to finish fifth in the 2024 Kentucky Derby, recording three wins over nine starts in 2025-26. Considered likely for the Dirt Mile, he was a surprise addition to the Classic, and his form and affinity for shorter distances offer little appeal in a deep field Saturday.

# 2026 BREEDERS' CUP: UNDER-THE-RADAR CONTENDERS ON SATURDAY

Many of the races on 2026 Breeders' Cup Saturday at Keeneland feature competitive fields with appealing live longshots to consider betting.

Even if a double-digit-priced horse falls short of victory, a top-three finish can boost payoffs in exotic wagers like the trifecta and superfecta.

Here are three under-the-radar contenders we recommend playing on Breeders' Cup Saturday:

**RACE 4: BREEDERS' CUP FILLY & MARE SPRINT (G1)**: **#6 Majestic Oops (15-1)**
There's plenty of pace entered in the Filly & Mare Sprint, so why not consider a confirmed closer like **#6 Majestic Oops (15-1)**?

A veteran of 39 starts, Majestic Oops has primarily contested two-turn races as of late, most recently finishing second in the 1 1/16-mile Zenyatta (G2). But her infrequent sprint races have been solid. She won the six-furlong American Beauty S. by 3 1/4 lengths while clocking her final furlong in a swift :11.89, and last year she finished third in the seven-furlong Ballerina (G1), beaten only by next-out Breeders' Cup Filly & Mare Sprint third-place finisher Hope Road and eventual Breeders' Cup Distaff (G1) winner Scylla.

If Majestic Oops encounters a fast pace while cutting back to seven furlongs, she may close from out of the clouds to challenge for victory at enticing odds.

**RACE 6: BREEDERS' CUP DIRT MILE (G1): #3 Full Serrano (10-1)**
**#3 Full Serrano (10-1)** won the 2024 Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile in gate-to-wire fashion. He's lost five starts in a row leading up to the 2026 edition, but he showed signs of returning to form in the 1 1/4-mile Pacific Classic (G1) last time out. He dueled with eventual winner Knightsbridge through intense fractions of :23.17, :45.94, and 1:10.02 (remarkable for a race with only 15 feet of run-up distance) before staying on to finish third with a 103 Brisnet Speed rating.

Cutting back to one mile off a sharp series of workouts stamps Full Serrano as an intriguing price play in the Dirt Mile. Don't be surprised if he rebounds in a big way.

**RACE 8: BREEDERS' CUP SPRINT (G1)**: **#3 Liam Smith (20-1)**
**#13 Englishman (4-5)** is an odds-on favorite to win the Sprint, but his big wins in the Woody Stephens (G1) and H. Allen Jerkens (G1) came over seven furlongs against fellow three-year-olds. Dashing six furlongs against older horses is a different ballgame, and Englishman must overcome breaking from the far outside post position.

**#3 Liam Smith (20-1)** is also three years old, but he's shown blinding speed over 6 1/2 furlongs and may prove difficult to catch. Last time out, in a $50,000 allowance optional claimer at Santa Anita, he set fractions of :20.92, :42.86, and 1:07.38 on his way to victory by 5 1/2 lengths in 1:13.90. Liam Smith looms as a dangerous pace player in the Sprint, and there's a chance he makes the lead and never looks back.

Good luck!

# 2026 BREEDERS' CUP CONTENDERS WORTH CONSIDERING AT A PRICE

by Vance Hanson

The 42-year history of the Breeders' Cup is replete with winners that returned boxcar prices. A few last year that paid nicely include Balantina ($43.20) in the Juvenile Fillies Turf (G1), Ethical Diamond ($57.20) in the Turf (G1), and Gezora ($20.20) in the Filly & Mare Turf (G1).

But longshots can also run well and not win, juicing up exacta and trifecta payouts. Who among this year's entries might be worth considering at decent prices? Here's my list.

### SALAHUDIN: JUVENILE (G1)

Of the two Bob Baffert trainees, Hughes is going to get far more play than this colt. But if Hughes' American Pharoah (G1) success happens to prove an outlier from a speed-figure perspective, then several other Juvenile contenders have a chance, including this stablemate.

Like Hughes, Salahudin is undefeated going into the Juvenile, albeit in Kentucky stakes that carry less prestige. However, this strapping son of Uncle Mo looks well built to handle more distance than he's been asked to run so far, even a short-stretch 1 1/16 miles at Keeneland. The start will be key, as he had to work a bit in the Iroquois (G3) to overcome a tardy beginning. A mid-single digit price would be fair.

### KILWIN: FILLY & MARE SPRINT (G1)

Although she began her career on turf and was a stakes winner over the surface, Kilwin is simply a faster filly on dirt. Her record in dirt sprints is a strong 4-3-1-0, the lone setback being a 5 1/2-length loss to Filly & Mare Sprint (G1) favorite Ways and Means in the Ballerina (G1).

The form might be reversed this time, if Ways and Means' track record of running to a lower level outside of her New York base holds up. And while neither filly has actually started at Keeneland, this is still more Kilwin's home track. She's relatively fresh with just two starts this year, and a hot pace could set things up nicely for her.

### JOHN THE BEER MAN: TURF SPRINT (G1)

A lightly raced five-year-old, John the Beer Man flubbed his lines when favored in the Kentucky Downs Turf Sprint (G2). But he didn't break as sharp that day as he usually does, nor is that European-style course always suitable to American horses accustomed to flatter ovals.

Granted, there's a ton of other speed in this race, but John the Beer Man's overall form is fairly solid among the American hopefuls. Especially that close third in the Jaipur (G1) last June behind the sidelined Reef Runner and Ag Bullet, both of whom finished in the top four in last year's Turf Sprint.

If John the Beer Man is able to shake off the Kentucky Downs dud, backers might be raising him a toast.

### TIFFANY: TURF (G1)

Ethical Diamond proved last year that you don't have to be one of Europe's elite runners to win the Turf. The six-year-old Tiffany fits a similar mold.

Unlike Ethical Diamond, who has excelled more in heritage handicaps than in Group company overseas, Tiffany has a stronger foundation in pattern events. She earned a belated Group 1 success on Aug. 9 in Germany, against males, and a month later claimed the Kentucky Turf Cup (G2) over Ethical Diamond under a rail-skimming ride by regular pilot Luke Morris.

While trainer Sir Mark Prescott will reportedly be watching the Turf from home in his nightclothes, he's managed this mare's career extremely well, much like his Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe (G1) winner Alpinista a few years ago. Tiffany's ability over 1 1/2 miles is more proven than Diamond Necklace's, and her relative freshness and the expected firmer ground might help her close the gap on Bay City Roller, who beat her convincingly in Munich a year ago.

# BREEDERS' CUP: FINDING VULNERABLE FAVORITES IN THE 2026 BREEDERS' CUP

by Vance Hanson

The record of post-time favorites in the 14 Breeders' Cup races at Del Mar in 2025 closely mirrored the results of the 2024 edition at the same track. Last year, five post-time favorites won, three placed, and six ran out of the money.

Of the five winning favorites, two were mentioned in this space as potentially vulnerable. Not great foresight in hindsight, but that's in the distant past as we look ahead to this year's fixture at Keeneland on Friday and Saturday.

Here are three likely favorites on the Saturday card that look potentially vulnerable.

### WAYS AND MEANS: FILLY & MARE SPRINT (G1)

From a consistency and speed figure perspective, Ways and Means should win this race. However, she simply hasn't been as imposing outside her New York base as she has been on it.

The beaten favorite in the 2024 Filly & Mare Sprint at Del Mar, Ways and Means has run just five times since, her two losses coming in the last two editions of the Derby City Distaff (G1) at Churchill Downs. Granted, she returned from extended layoffs both times and perhaps isn't a fan of that surface in general, but the fact is she remains winless outside any New York track.

Note, too, that it took her more than a month to return to the worktab following her impressive win in the Aug. 29 Ballerina (G1). Perhaps that was by design, given she wasn't going to start again before the Breeders' Cup, but it gives additional cause for pause on a mare that has run so sporadically over the past two years.

### BACIO: TURF SPRINT (G1)

An undeniably fast horse, Bacio has risen far and fast since securing a second-level allowance victory against older rivals at Churchill Downs during Kentucky Derby week. However, the quality and depth of the fields he was beating in England since then perhaps are a little overstated.

The Palace of Holyroodhouse Handicap at Royal Ascot was not, in fact, a stakes, and the dash restricted to three-year-olds was indeed American-dominated. Bacio dazzled, but the runner-up there was the George Weaver-trained Sandal's Song, who had previously placed in two of three stakes attempts and has not yet run back.

The Nunthorpe (G1) at York was far more prestigious, and Bacio used his early foot to separate himself from the pack early and won under a heavy 139-pound impost. Keep in mind, though, that the better European sprinters (e.g. Commanche Brave, Almeraq) were either not in the field or six-furlong specialists this season.

Bacio did beat Starlust, the 2024 Breeders' Cup Turf Sprint winner, but that has been the only time Starlust has placed in nine starts since that Turf Sprint upset at Del Mar. And the Nunthorpe third, Rumstar, is hardly considered top flight overseas.

Bacio still has to prove he can beat a world-class field while also overcoming more intense early pressure, which he will presumably face on Saturday. Whatever his off price, it figures to be too short to take with confidence.

### NITROGEN: DISTAFF (G1)

Nitrogen would be a deserving winner of this race and is in the pole position for championship honors, but my concerns with her mirror those I have about Ways and Means.

In her dirt career, Nitrogen has been far more explosive in New York than she has elsewhere. While the record this year suggests she's faster than she's ever been, losses in last year's Spinster (G1) and Breeders' Cup Distaff, as well as early season losses in the Azeri (G2) and Apple Blossom H. (G1), were all outside New York and at times against generally inferior rivals.

There is not much depth to this Distaff, but Fully Subscribed figures to be more competitive against Nitrogen than in their Ogden Phipps (G1) encounter, and Splendora also has a lot of quality about her. As potentially one of the shortest prices on Breeders' Cup weekend, I'm inclined to take Nitrogen on.

# HOW KENTUCKY DERBY WINNERS AND ALUMNI FARE IN THE BREEDERS' CUP CLASSIC

by Alastair Bull

Kentucky Derby alumni Forever Young winning the 2025 Breeders' Cup Classic. (Photo by Horsephotos.com)

Ask anyone what the most important route races in North America are for three-year-olds and for all ages, and the answer nearly everyone would give is the Kentucky Derby and the Breeders' Cup Classic.

Given that both are the richest races in their respective categories in North America, and both are over 1 1/4 miles, you'd imagine a strong link between the winners of both races, right?

If you'd asked that question in 1991, after the eighth edition of the Breeders' Cup Classic, the answer would have been firmly in the affirmative. At one point, four consecutive Classics were won by Derby winners, and in two Classics there had been a meeting of Derby winners: the famous fight to win the 1987 Classic between Ferdinand and Alysheba, and the less well-known 1991 edition, when 1990 Derby and Classic winner Unbridled finished third, and 1991 Derby winner Strike the Gold was fifth behind Black Tie Affair.

Since then, however, the Breeders' Cup Classic has provided slim pickings for Derby winners. Only two have won the Classic since 1990; one was the Triple Crown winner American Pharoah, and one, Authentic, did the double in highly unusual circumstances – due to the Kentucky Derby being delayed until Sept. 5 because of Covid-19, there was only a two-month gap between the two races rather than the usual six months.

There's also been no further meeting of Derby winners in the Classic, though that is set to change in 2026 if pre-entries Golden Tempo and Sovereignty both make the start.

As is often the case, however, there's a bit more to the story than that. Let's take a deeper dive into the connection between the Derby and the Classic.

## Many Derby winners don't make it to the Classic at all

To date, there have been 42 editions of the Breeders' Cup Classic. Once the Triple Crown is over, the Classic is the natural end-of-season target for the Derby winner, and this year Golden Tempo is set to take his place in the Classic.

However, only 14 Derby winners have made it to the starting gate in the Classic as three-year-olds, with varying results:

| Year | Kentucky Derby Winner | BC Classic |
|---|---|---|
| 1987 | Alysheba | 2nd |
| *1989* | *Sunday Silence* | *1st* |
| *1990* | *Unbridled* | *1st* |
| 1991 | Strike the Gold | 5th |
| 1994 | Go for Gin | 8th |
| 2000 | Fusaichi Pegasus | 6th |
| 2002 | War Emblem | 8th |
| 2003 | Funny Cide | 9th |
| 2007 | Street Sense | 4th |
| 2009 | Mine That Bird | 9th |
| 2014 | California Chrome | 3rd |
| *2015* | *American Pharoah* | *1st* |
| *2020** | *Authentic* | *1st* |
| 2022 | Rich Strike | 4th |

I've put an asterisk beside Authentic, not because he wasn't a worthy winner of both races, but because he alone didn't face a six-month gap between the two features. It's a tougher task to have your horse fit for these races with six months between them than with two months. But including Authentic, that's a 28.6% strike rate of Derby winners in the Breeders' Cup Classic.

In addition, eight Derby winners have contested the Classic as older horses. Five of these had also contested the Classic as three-year-olds, meaning only three raced in the Classic for the first time as older horses:

| Horse | Year of Derby Win | BC Classic as older horse | Age at Breeders' Cup | BC Classic Finish |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ferdinand | 1986 | 1987 | 4 | 1st |
| *Alysheba* | 1987 | 1988 | 4 | 1st |
| *Unbridled* | 1990 | 1991 | 4 | 3rd |
| *Strike the Gold* | 1991 | 1992 | 4 | 8th |
| Silver Charm | 1997 | 1998 | 4 | 2nd |
| *Funny Cide* | 2003 | 2005 | 5 | 10th |
| Giacomo | 2005 | 2006 | 4 | 4th |
| *California Chrome* | 2014 | 2016 | 5 | 2nd |

# HOW KENTUCKY DERBY WINNERS AND ALUMNI FARE IN THE BREEDERS' CUP CLASSIC *(continued)*

by Alastair Bull

So, in total, only 17 Kentucky Derby winners have contested the Breeders' Cup Classic, or just 40 percent. When you add horses that ran more than once, Derby winners have made 22 appearances in the Classic. The winning strike rate is 27%.

The reasons the other winners didn't make the post vary. Generally, however, most can be placed into a variety of categories:

Eight didn't race again after the Triple Crown series until after the Breeders' Cup Classic: Ferdinand (1986), Lil E. Tee (1992), Silver Charm (1997), Real Quiet (1998), Monarchos (2001), Giacomo (2005), Animal Kingdom (2011), and Mystik Dan (2024). Three of these (Ferdinand, Silver Charm, and Giacomo) contested the Classic the following year, while Animal Kingdom contested the Mile on turf instead. Mystik Dan was set to contest the Dirt Mile as a four-year-old but was withdrawn on veterinary advice, while Lil E. Tee, Real Quiet, and Monarchos suffered injuries at four that resulted in their retirements before the Classic.

Eight didn't race again after the Triple Crown ended, for various reasons: Swale (1984), Grindstone (1996), Charismatic (1999), Smarty Jones (2004), Barbaro (2006), I'll Have Another (2012), Justify (2018), and Country House (2019).

Seven had their final races between the Belmont Stakes and the Breeders' Cup Classic, for various reasons: Spend a Buck (1985), Thunder Gulch (1995), Big Brown (2008), Super Saver (2010), Orb (2013), Nyquist (2016), and Mage (2023).

One, the filly Winning Colors, contested another Breeders' Cup race as a three-year-old, the Distaff, where she was second to Personal Ensign.

Three didn't race in the Classic at three due to injury, returned the following season, but didn't race well enough to contest the Classic: Sea Hero (1993), Always Dreaming (2017), Mandaloun (2021).

The only missing horse from that collection is 2025 Kentucky Derby winner Sovereignty. He raced after the Triple Crown series ended as a three-year-old, winning the Jim Dandy and the Travers, before a spiked fiver kept him from contesting the Classic; he was set to contest the 2026 Classic when this piece was written.

The lesson is that it's not an easy task to contest both races. But if a Derby winner does, they often run well; there have been six victories, and five other times when the Derby winner reached the top three.

| Horse | Derby Year | Derby Finish | Year won BC Classic |
|---|---|---|---|
| Proud Truth | 1985 | 5th | 1985 |
| Skywalker | 1985 | 6th | 1986 |
| Skip Away | 1996 | 12th | 1997 |
| Cat Thief | 1999 | 3rd | 1999 |
| Curlin | 2007 | 3rd | 2007 |
| Mucho Macho Man | 2011 | 3rd | 2013 |
| Gun Runner | 2016 | 3rd | 2017 |
| Vino Rosso | 2018 | 9th | 2019 |
| White Abarrio | 2022 | 16th | 2023 |
| Sierra Leone | 2024 | 2nd | 2024 |
| Forever Young | 2025 | 3rd | 2026 |

Perhaps the most notable thing about this list is the number of recent Breeders' Cup Classics that have fallen to Kentucky Derby alumni; since 2017, six of the last nine Classics (the five above plus Derby winner Authentic, whose unusual circumstances have already been alluded to) went to horses that contested the Derby.

What's notable about all those horses is that none contested all three legs of the Triple Crown, and only Vino Rosso, Authentic, and Sierra Leone raced in two Triple Crown legs. Could the modern trend of skipping one or more Triple Crown legs, while disappointing for those contests, help a horse maintain a career long enough to reach a Breeders' Cup Classic? Trainers who don't run their horses throughout the Triple Crown argue they do so for their horse's long-term health and career, so it will be interesting to see whether they are proved correct and this trend continues.

## BREEDERS' CUP CLASSIC AND KENTUCKY DERBY CONCLUSIONS

This study hasn't examined how many Derby alumni have contested the Breeders' Cup Classic, so it's not a comprehensive picture. But it does show that Kentucky Derby alumni have won 17 Breeders' Cup Classics, or 40%.

This year's 10 pre-entries for the Breeders' Cup Classic include four Kentucky Derby alumni: the Japanese pair of Forever Young and T O Password (third and fifth in the 2024 Derby), last year's Derby winner Sovereignty, and 2026 Derby graduate Golden Tempo. We look forward to seeing whether any of them can add their names to the Breeders' Cup Classic honor roll.

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