



Today’s playbook provided by Fair Grounds racing analyst Joe Kristufek, who has an extensive background in the horse racing industry as a handicapper, on-air talent, producer and fan development specialist. He is well recognized for his creative analysis and wagering tactics and he loves interacting with racing fans. **Follow on Twitter @JoeyDaKRacing**

Subject to change due to track conditions and scratches. Tune into the paddock show for the most up-to-date information. Check program numbers for accuracy.

Joe’s 25-26 Top Pick Stats thru 2-7-26

Races	Wins	2 nd	3 rd	Win%	WIN ROI	WPS%
258	69	53	36	26.7%	\$1.58	61.2%

Thursday, February 12, 2026

Race 1 – 50-cent PK 5 (15%)

#2 Hawija – Sliding down the class ladder & returns off a troubled trip against much better last out. Finds his friends.

Joe’s Picks: 2-6/1-4-5-3

Race 2 – 50-cent PK 4

#5 Slushy – Drops in class for his first start in 14-plus months. The trainer is so much better than his meet stats indicate.

Joe’s Picks: 5-1-4/6-3-7-8

Race 3 – 50-cent PK3

#6 Sir Pistolero – Takes a sizeable drop in class and cuts back in distance for today’s assignment. Capable & may offer value.

Joe’s Picks: 6-4-2/1-8-7-5

Race 4 – 50-cent CC 6 (15%)
Carryover = \$42,169

#3 Matching Funds – Has run two decent races on turf against maiden special weight company. Homebred fits well on drop.

Joe's Picks: 3-1-2/6-4-7-5

Race 5 – 50-cent PK 5 (15%)

#5 Yorktown Panther – Showed little in his last couple, but he did finish 3rd behind a talented top pair in an ALW three back.

Joe's Picks: 5-8/6-3-1

Race 6 – 50-cent PK 4

#2 Fast Connection – Major step forward in his 2nd turf start when taking the blinkers off last out. He ran too well to lose.

Joe's Picks: 2-1/5-3-6-7-4

Race 7 – 50-cent PK3

#1 Emancipation – Has been underwhelming against tougher, but he now drops into a very soft spot & lures Jose to ride.

Joe's Picks: 1/4-6-8/3-5-2

Race 8

#4 To the Chief – A MUCH improved horse since the last time he ran on turf & he's bred for it. Exits the toughest race.

Joe's Picks: 4-6/8-2-10-1-7

Race 9

#1 Sir Mack – Ran into a little trouble in a recent 3rd place finish, and now stretches out to a mile from the rail draw.

Joe's Picks: 1-2-3/7-8-9-4-6-5

Best Bet: Race 6 -- #2 Fast Connection (7-2 ML)

Likely Overlay: Race 8 -- #4 To the Chief (6-1 ML)

Favorite Against: Race 4 -- #6 Skip Forward (3-1 ML)

