

Date: July 31st, 2020

Track: Del Mar

By Brad Free

BEST BET: Lightning Fast (9th race)

First Race

1. Conquest Lemonraid

2. Impression

3. Little No Way

A negative class drop to \$8k claiming is odd for **CONQUEST LEMONRAID**, claimed from a third-place finish in a live \$16k race at Churchill Downs. That race produced at least three next-out winners. Furthermore, 'LEMONRAID entered a \$25k claiming race on Monday but scratched to go here instead. Strange. However, he is the fastest in the field on numbers; the pace scenario and closers-friendly track profile favor his style. Except for the negative drop, he almost seems a standout. **IMPRESSION** split the field two months ago at a higher level; he drops to the bottom and returns to the Del Mar main track on which he scored his most-recent victory. **IMPRESSION** is one of several in the field with an up-front style of running. **LITTLE NO WAY** stretches out and drops in class, same as **ARTIE B GOOD**. If the top choice misfires, anything goes.

Second Race

1. Cielo d'Oro

2. I'm the Boss of Me

3. Mandragora Seeker

CIELO D'ORO debuts with a solid workout pattern for trainer John Sadler, who won with four of his last nine 2-year-old firsters in summer turf sprints at Del Mar. 'ORO is by Sky Mesa, whose juvenile progeny have won 15 percent first out; her dam is an unraced sibling to multiple G1 winner It's Tricky. 'ORO should come out firing. **I'M THE BOSS OF ME** reportedly has speed, trainer Peter Miller is rolling with juvenile first-time starters; 5-for-12 this season. **MANDRAGORA SEEKER** also is quick. She blazed 33.80 from the gate one week ago while flashing more speed than two workmates (viewed on XBTv.com). 'SEEKER is a sibling to a pair of stakes winners, but her young sire is 0-for-12 with debut 2yos. With a seven-pound apprentice rider aboard, 'SEEKER will be involved early and might be the one to catch. **CANOODLING** also debuts with fast works.

Third Race

1. Liberalism

2. Althea Gibson

3. Angel Creek

LIBERALISM, in the money all four starts, is sitting on a maiden win in this Cal-bred maiden sprint. She finished an okay third in her comeback, and improved second start back. She missed by a neck after dueling on a solid pace while finishing more than three lengths clear of third. Drawn outside, while her main rivals are stuck in the inside posts, **LIBERALISM** should be tough. **ALTHEA GIBSON** ran well finishing second in her debut. She was off slow, raced near back and finished willingly in a race won by the pace-pressing favorite. Promising debut by 'GIBSON, although the inside post does her no favors. **ANGEL CREEK** makes her career debut off a string of bullet workouts at Ruidoso Downs. Sired by Lea (10 percent debut wins, 3yos and up), 'CREEK was produced by G2 winner Brooke's Halo, whose foals include stakes winners Gorgeous Ginny, Rock and Ginny. First-time starter **ALL STAR HEAT** might want more than six furlongs, but even if she is outrun early that style is productive this summer. Trainer Ron Ellis put jockey Drayden Van Dyke on just two first-time starters the past five years at Del Mar: First Star paid \$56.80 last July 20; Pleasant as Pie paid \$68.80 on Sept. 6, 2015.

Fourth Race

1. Cajun Treasure

2. Honos Man

3. Seeking Refuge

CAJUN TREASURE gets the tepid call over ship-and-win **HONOS MAN** in this \$32k claiming N2L turf mile. 'TREASURE is making his third start back from a layoff. He split the field last out, and has back numbers fast enough to win this. **HONOS MAN** finished second with a good number (79 Beyer) last out at Belmont in his first start of the year. His effort was flattered when third place Bray returned to win. 'MAN is realistically spotted for his California debut. **SEEKING REFUGE** finished a creditable third last out in his initial try vs. winners. He should get a cozy trip positioned just off the speed. **KRIS'S WILD KAT** is fast, but possibly distance-challenged.

Fifth Race

1. Himiko

2. Happier

3. Last First Kiss

HIMIKO finished more than 11 lengths clear of third last out, earning a speed figure (87 Beyer) ordinarily fast enough to win a maiden special-weight. Yet there are reasons to tread lightly. First, the filly that beat her (Provocation) returned Saturday to finish a distant third while her speed figure declined 19 points. Perhaps the numbers earned by Provocation and **HIMIKO** were an aberration. Also, the pace of the race **HIMIKO** exits was inordinately slow. She is the one to beat, not sure if she can be trusted at a short price. Stablemate **HAPPIER** makes her debut; firsters from this outfit usually are ready to roll. Seven furlongs a tough distance at which to debut, of course. **LAST FIRST KISS** gradually improved as her career has unfolded. The five-start maiden goes route to sprint following three successive in-the-money finishes around two turns. **LA V.** may have only been prepping finishing third to the top choice. Improvement likely second time out. **VIA ANGELICA** also goes route to sprint after a disappointing third as the odds-on favorite in a route.

Sixth Race

1. Go Daddy Go

2. Sicilia

3. Salvator Mundi

Third last out in a fast race from which the runner-up returned to win, **GO DADDY GO** is the obvious choice in this entry-level allowance turf route.

'DADDY missed by two lengths; runner-up Lincoln City won a N1X on Saturday. **SICILIA** makes her U.S. debut with decent European form. She faced good company in France, where she placed in two stakes. Lasix on for trainer Neil Drysdale, who occasionally pops with imports (3 for 16 since 2016). **SALVATOR MUNDI** moves up in class after a sharp comeback victory in a starter allowance. He did not have much behind him, but he looked good doing it. **SILENCED** goes long for the first time in his career, and will try to steal it. Gate-to-wire turf-route winners were rare the first two weeks of racing, but the rails move to 30 feet today. The profile could change.

Seventh Race

1. Brickyard Ride

2. Cali Dude

3. Mr Paytience

Speedy **BRICKYARD RIDE** figures to clear the field, seeking his third straight. Although horses with his up-front running style have not won their fair share this summer on the main track, no horse in this Cal-bred N1X can run early with **BRICKYARD RIDE**. The son of Clubhouse Ride nominated to the Real Good Deal Stakes (race 9) at seven furlongs; his connections opted instead for this shorter trip. **CALI DUDE**, also by Clubhouse Ride and also nominated to the Real Good Deal, makes his first start since November. Solid workout pattern, runs well fresh, figures for a cozy trip positioned second behind the speed. If the top choice does not stay, **CALI DUDE** could get first run. **MR PAYTIENCE** broke through the gate prior to the start last time and completely misfired. The race was a toss. His runner-up finish two starts back puts him in the hunt. **SUMMER FIRE** goes first off the claim, turf to dirt, first-time gelding, returning to a racing surface that he likes.

Eighth Race

1. Ivy League

2. She's a Lil Flirt

3. Madone

Well-bred first-time starter **IVY LEAGUE** gets the call in this turf route for maiden 2yo fillies. Sired by Medaglia d'Oro and the first runner produced by stakes winner With Honors, 'LEAGUE has been working very well for her debut and looks "live" first out. **SHE'S A LIL FLIRT** has something the top choice lacks. That is, racing experience. Her debut was merely a spin-around-the-track prep on dirt; she is by outstanding turf sire American Pharoah. With a race under her belt, switching to a surface she should like based on her sire, she fits despite the outside post. Her stablemate **MADONE** will make her career debut for a highly productive trainer-jockey combo. First-timer **FLORAL ESSENCE** is a Candy Ride filly produced by a graded stakes-placed turf mare.

Ninth Race

1. Lightning Fast

2. El Tigre Terrible

3. Margot's Boy

This sprint stakes for Cal-bred 3yos is the right spot for **LIGHTNING FAST**, who has improved this season. He was a first-time gelding when he crushed maidens in January, then took spring and early summer off while racing was interrupted. His comeback three weeks ago was only a prep. First in more than five months, facing older open allowance sprinters, he raced wide and ran around the track in a race designed as a prep for this race. 'FAST faces easier than he met in the allowance, he is drawn outside, has tactical speed for a pressing trip and figures to move forward with a race under his belt. **EL TIGRE TERRIBLE** is due for some luck. He had a brutal trip two back finishing second in a turf sprint, and a similarly eventful trip here opening day in a turf route stakes. He pulled while unrelaxed, was blocked most of the final five-sixteenths and never had a chance. Though he has been racing on turf, he is 2-for-3 on Del Mar dirt, and figures as one of the favorites. He might only require a clean trip. **MARGOT'S BOY** was hounded through a fast pace in the two-turn Oceanside, hung tough to deep stretch, and finished sixth. Excellent try under compromising conditions. Unsure if he can sprint or if he can dirt, but there is no doubt his ability. Four of the last five winners of this race were going route to sprint, as are 'TERRIBLE and 'BOY. **PHANTOM BOSS** is speed, dropping from a Grade 3.

Tenth Race

1. Railsplitter

2. Exhort

3. Palace Prince

This turf route for \$62.5k maiden-claiming runners is tough. **RAILSPLITTER** lost his chance at the break last time when he bobbled and was unable to produce his customary speed. The next-to-last-place finish was a debacle that can be disregarded. His runner-up effort two back might be good enough. **EXHORT** returns to the maiden-claiming ranks after a respectable fourth vs. special-weight maidens. Doug O'Neill trains the top pair. Also-eligible **PALACE PRINCE** ran the race of his career last out at this class level, but the rails-at-30 setting and outside post do him no favors vs. a similar group. **SPANISH COUNT** returns from a layoff as a first-time gelding, dropping in class.

Eleventh Race

1. Atina

2. Diamond of Value

3. Majestic Diva

ATINA won her only start on the Del Mar main track, earning the highest speed figure of her career. It is fair to say she likes the track. The veteran mare returns from a two-month freshening, drops to \$8k claiming and should fire her best shot first start back. **DIAMOND OF VALUE** is unproven around two turns, unplaced both routes. But her sprint form is relatively decent; five starts over the Del Mar surface produced three runner-up finishes. **MAJESTIC DIVA** is the fastest in the field based on romping wins two starts and five starts back. The thing about 'DIVA is it is not always clear which mare will show up. She has won running long, but might prefer seven furlongs. **PAIGE RUNNER** takes a big class drop.