Date: August 15th, 2020   **Track:** Del Mar

By Brad Free

BEST BET: Mucho Unusual (9th race)

First Race

1. Canadian Ginger	2. Bella Renella	3. Thunder Woman

CANADIAN GINGER crushed maiden-20s last out, and is realistically spotted at the $16k claiming N2L level for her first against winners. She is fast, running at the same distance of her blowout, and obviously likes Del Mar. **BELLA RENELLA** could vie for favoritism based on her recent speed figures including a field-high 66 Beyer last out. Furthermore, she is racing for the first time at the bottom class level for winners. She will rally late. **THUNDER WOMAN** was pre-race compromised last out when she broke through the gate before the start and split the field. Two previous starts in Northern California, maiden win and third at this level, put her in the hunt. PASITO wanted no part of two turns last out. Wide early, she chucked at the half-mile. Claimed off the ninth-place finish, she shortens to her preferred one-turn trip and should be running late.

Second Race

1. Midnight Mystery	2. Seiche	3. Disco Ball

A solid runner-up comeback stamps **MIDNIGHT MYSTERY** the horse to beat in this maiden special-weight for older. 'MYSTERY set solid fractions, shook off a pace rival that finished next-to-last, and missed by only a length. Good comeback, outside post, the one to beat with a front-running/pressing trip. He is trained by Bob Baffert, who also entered fast-working firster **SEICHE**. The latter is a Super Saver gelding produced by a maiden dam; Baffert and jockey Mike Smith are 9-for-20 with first-time starters (all ages) the past five years. **DISCO BALL** finished an okay second in his late-June comeback at Los Al. He lost by six lengths as the favorite, but it turns out that he lost to a good colt. Vertical Threat wheeled back to win a minor stakes by more than five lengths. DIRECT LINE makes his career debut with fast works, although older maidens from this stable tend to race into condition rather than fire first time out.

Third Race

1. Graziano	2. Tilted Towers	3. Much More Halo

First-time starter **GRAZIANO** posted a series of blazing works; he is the first runner from a fast dam that won her career debut. Bred for turf, the apparently quick colt could be long gone. However, the fifth-place comeback by **TILTED TOWERS** was solid. With a clean trip second start back, he looms a legitimate contender. In his comeback, 'TOWERS was shuffled and lost position early, unleashed an extended rally, was late switching leads and finished strongly in race won by the pacesetter. Excellent comeback; improvement likely. **MUCH MORE HALO** is a seven-start maiden that finished second his last three turf sprints. He will get there one of these days. First-time starter CEM SULTAN, by Lemon Drop Kid, probably wants longer than five furlongs.

Fourth Race

1. Ronamo	2. Convex	3. Alvaaro

RONAMO could have won his California debut at this starter allowance level with patient handling. However, the Kentucky shipper made a premature move, opened up in the lane, and got collared while finishing more than five clear of third. He ran a winning race, and figures as the one to beat if he runs two alike. He will have to catch likely pacesetter **CONVEX**, who returned last month as a first-time gelding and trounced maiden-20 sprinters by more than 11 lengths. He meets winners, stretches to a mile and could be gone if he can avoid a duel with the rival to his inside. That is the improved **ALVAARO**, who ran super finishing third in a turf route two weeks ago. He also runs well on dirt, and will be forwardly placed along with CONVEX. NEGOTIATOR perked up with a decisive maiden-20 victory win last out in his first try on dirt. Look for him late.

Fifth Race

1. Caisson	2. Eagle in the Sky	3. Raisebeforetheflop

CAISSON finished fourth at even-money in his debut, but he ran well in that turf mile and figures to improve. The well-bred colt (War Front, produced by G1 winner) was three- and four-wide throughout, raced greenly in the lane, and finished okay. He ran like a maiden that needed a start, which is exactly what trainer Richard Mandella predicted going in. Now that the 2yo knows what racing is about, expect significant move-up second out. **EAGLE IN THE SKY** stretches out from a pair of seconds vs. Cal-bred maidens. Sired by Sky Mesa, sibling to turf stakes winner Outside Nashville, 'SKY should handle the distance and footing. **RAISEBEFORETHEFLOP** was only prepping his third-place debut, a race won by a stablemate (Girther) who came back to finish second in the G2 Best Pal Stakes. Others that finished behind 'FLOP include next-out maiden-claiming winner Tripple Shake and Hot Rod Charlie, among the favorites in race 3 Friday. The point is, 'FLOP ran well against a good field and is bred to run long on turf. EL JOY is a full sibling to G1 turf route winner Henley's Joy. The debut by EL JOY was only a prep.

Sixth Race

1. Father O'Flaherty	2. Rousing Slammer	3. Lemon Drop Shot

A creditable third, with trouble, in his debut stamps **FATHER O'FLAHERTY** the one to beat in this Cal-bred maiden-50 for 2yos. He steadied at the three-

eighths, re-rallied for third, and galloped out with run past the wire. Solid debut, he gets the call second out despite being buried on the rail. **ROUSING SLAMMER** probably has more speed than the top choice; he improved last out when he split the field vs. similar. **LEMON DROP SHOT** finished an okay second in his debut at Pleasanton; he can improve. First-time starter COZY BEAR is by Commissioner, whose juvenile progeny have won 22 percent first out. C'MON JENNA finished an okay fourth after breaking from the rail in his debut. He can improve.

Seventh Race

1. Jamming Eddy	2. Doc Tommy	3. Hit the Seam

In a wide-open Cal-bred turf sprint; also-eligible **JAMMING EDDY** gets the call based on proven turf ability and two sharp recent dirt efforts including a big dirt win at this class level. Revised conditions allow horses to retain allowance eligibility switching surfaces. 'EDDY has run well on turf, his recent dirt races have been super including a runner-up finish last out in a fast open N1X. The one to beat if he draws in. **DOC TOMMY** is worth a long look with or without the top choice. 'TOMMY had trouble on the turn in his comeback, and finished an okay sixth while racing for the first time since November. Reunited with the jockey who rode him to a maiden win and stakes second last year, 'TOMMY figures with a clean trip. **HIT THE SEAM** trounced starter allowance turf sprinters two months ago; he will keep the pace honest if not outright steal it. UNDENIABLE PROOF finished second last out in a similar Cal-bred N1X turf sprint. FOSTER BOI will rally late. Lots of ways to go this deep field.

Eighth Race

1. Illumination	2. Isn't She Lovely	3. Park Avenue

ILLUMINATION appears ready to roll first time out in this 2yo filly maiden sprint. Sired by Medaglia D'Oro and the first runner produced by debut winner/stakes winner Light the City, ILLUMINATION worked in company with a stakes winner one week ago from the gate, and looked good (viewed on XTBV.com). All systems go. However, she is not the only fast-working well-bred filly in the field. **ISN'T SHE LOVELY** is an Into Mischief filly with fast workouts for her debut. **PARK AVENUE**, by Quality Road, also has trained fast for her debut. FOREST CARAWAY rounds out the quartet of firsters that should control the race.

Ninth Race

1. Mucho Unusual	2. Cordiality	3. Kitty Boom Boom

The class of the field, dropping from a series of graded races, **MUCHO UNUSUAL** is "supposed to" win this turf stakes for Cal-bred fillies and mares. Though she has not won since summer 2019, 'UNUSUAL finished in the money five of her last eight graded races including a G2 victory on this course last summer. Her winter-spring form at Santa Anita would be good enough for this race; she was in over her head last time in a G1 at Keeneland. The pace of this race should be legit, 'UNUSUAL consistently finishes faster than her rivals. Low-odds standout? Looks that way. She is trained by Tim Yakteen, who also starts multiple Cal-bred stakes winner **CORDIALITY**, who wired a similar Cal-bred stakes last month and won this race in 2018. A veteran with 11 wins from 31 starts, CORDIALITY has speed but does not necessarily require the lead. She is sharp, and a horse-for-course on the Del Mar turf. **KITTY BOOM BOOM** merits longshot consideration, first in six months. Her lone stakes win in spring 2019 was more impressive than the Beyer Figure; she is eligible to the first allowance condition yet returning in a $125k stakes race for a trainer whose comebackers typically run super. The lightly raced 4yo could slip through the pari-mutuel cracks. Double-digit upset? SEDAMAR seems to run best when she gets covered up early and blasts home. That did not happen last out when she chased loose-on-the-lead CORDIALITY. Looks like a little more pace in this race, and an inside post where SEDAMAR can tuck in, wait and finish.

Tenth Race

1. Pyron	2. It's Tiz Time	3. Lil Sydney

Midwest shipper **PYRON** settled in nicely at Del Mar, where his bullet work two weeks ago was followed by an easy half-mile. His pressing style should play well in a sprint not exactly loaded with speed; his highly rated runner-up finish two back for a $50k claim tag would crush. First in California, first for trainer Mark Glatt, all systems go. **IT'S TIZ TIME** drops from allowance to starter allowance; he won a N2L starter on this track last summer at 74-1. Not sure if there is enough pace to flatter his rally, but he will be finishing. **LIL SYDNEY** attempts an ambitious class hike from $16k claiming N2L, but he won decisively by more than three lengths last out and gives his trainer a solid one-two punch. Glatt trains both 'SYDNEY and the top choice. EMERALD MAGIC adds blinkers and should be forwardly placed along with Los Al speedster CAUSE AND EFFECT.

Eleventh Race

1. Never Easy	2. The Hunted	3. Mr. Roary

The fourth-place finish by **NEVER EASY** last month was better than it looks; the gelding can win this turf claiming route (non-winners this year) first off the claim by Steve Knapp. 'EASY pressed a blazing pace in that unrestricted $25k claiming race, made the lead on the far turn, then was gobbled up by closers that rallied from 8-9-10. Excellent effort by 'EASY. Reunited with Prat, who rode him to a highly rated runner-up finish three back, 'EASY will get the jump on the closers and can post a minor upset with patient handling. **THE HUNTED** drops to claiming for the first time in his career, first start in nearly five months, returning to the course on which he won in 2018 and 2019. He took some shots against good turf rivals early this year, and simply was not good enough. He fits perfect this spot, and should fire his best shot first start back. **MR. ROARY** also returns from an extended layoff, while dropping to a new low level. ACKER makes his first starts in nearly six months, also facing easier than he has been facing in recent races.