By Brad Free

BEST BET: Basilia (1st race)

First Race

1. Basilia	2. Nurturing	3. Embodied

BASILIA figures to win this turf mile for 2yo maiden fillies, based on her promising local debut and her trainer's record with favorites in maiden turf routes. BASILIA had a tough trip last out. She broke on top, was wrangled off the pace, got shuffled back and lost position on the far turn, then finished willingly for fourth. Good effort, under the circumstances. She removes blinkers and switches riders to Mike Smith. Furthermore, trainer Peter Miller won with 6 of his last 10 favorites in maiden turf routes. First-time starter **NURTURING**, by 20-percent juvenile debut stallion Violence, debuts for a trainer that pops every so often with this type. Michael McCarthy won a turf route three weeks ago with debut 2yo Rombauer. The presence of the meet's leading grass rider Umberto Rispoli on NURTURING suggests positive intent. Frist-time starter **EMBODIED** is a Medaglia d'Oro filly produced by a turf route stakes winner. SWEETEST ANGEL is a Candy Ride sibling to stakes winner Roo's Valentine. The truth is, if the favorite misfires, this is anyone's race.

Second Race

1. First Star	2. Qahira	3. Morning Cynn

FIRST STAR, who tailed off in winter at Santa Anita, returns from a freshening to the place where it all started. She won the first two starts of her career last summer at Del Mar, and subsequently placed in a G2 at Keeneland. She has a solid work pattern for her return. The challenge for 'STAR is to catch a potentially loose-on-the-lead comebacker **QAHIRA**. The latter also is a Del Mar horse for course, she is 2-for-2 on this track. This is her first start in a year, but she obviously runs well fresh and could find herself alone on the lead. Come catch her. **MORNING CYNN** returns from Northern California, and goes route to sprint following a runner-up finish last out. PROUD EMMA makes her first start of 2020.

Third Race

1. Golden Principal	2. Been Studying Her	3. Biddy Duke

GOLDEN PRINCIPAL figures to make the lead, open up and lead this N1X sprint gate to wire while making her first start since January. She won her career debut on this track last fall, she has worked fast for her return, and she appears to be the speed of the field. **BEEN STUDYING HER** is the "class" of the field, a two-time Cal-bred stakes winner eligible to the first allowance condition. She finished second last out behind Big Sweep, a contender Saturday in the Solana Beach Stakes (race 9). 'HER will rally late. **BIDDY DUKE** missed by a nose last out in a $55k stakes race at Pleasanton. She has enough speed to keep the top choice in her sights. PAID INFORMANT and MOHEMIAN RHAPSODY each won their only start. 'INFORMANT has not raced in two years however, while 'RHAPSODY earned a low fig in her win.

Fourth Race

1. Shanghai Truffles	2. Mylittlerunaway	3. Rather Nosy

SHANGHAI TRUFFLES was in tough last out, yet she ran well to finish third in a N1X. She drops into a N3L starter allowance second start back from a short layoff and gets the nod to grind it out from off the pace. Potential pacesetter **MYLITTLERUNAWAY** wheels back eight days after she led to deep stretch in a N1X turf route. This is her first start on dirt, she is a legit contender on the front end if she can avoid a duel with **RATHER NOSY**. The latter set a strong pace (slow surface) and tired to third last out in her initial try around two turns. The pace gives her a built-in alibi, yet the feeling is she might prefer to sprint. MESO will be running late. Only six entered this mile race, but it's actually a fairly wide-open race.

Fifth Race

1. Horse Greedy	2. Oh Marvelous Me	3. I'm Busy

HORSE GREEDY was claimed from a runner-up finish for $20k last out, a fast race in which he finished more than eight lengths clear of third. He actually ran a winning race. Up one small bump in class for high-percent first-off-the-claim trainer Miller, the gelding is comfortably drawn outside where he figures for a pressing/stalking trip racing in the clear. Tough to beat if he runs two alike. **OH MARVELOUS ME** has no speed, but he packs a wallop in the stretch and has won 9 of 38 overall. Third last out in a $32k claiming sprint, he drops a notch and meets a field with enough speed to flatter his closing rally. **I'M BUSY** dueled inside and cracked three weeks ago while racing over a surface that compromised the inside lanes. The dilemma for 'BUSY is coping with the speedster to his inside. HARVEST A STORM goes route to sprint and will rally; POSTERIZE is the aforementioned speedster that will keep 'BUSY busy.

Sixth Race

1. Factorial	2. Summer Fire	3. Brix

FACTORIAL cuts back to one turn after finding two turns out of reach. He set the pace into the lane and faded to fifth. But his most recent turf sprint, a runner-up finish two back, would be fast enough for these. **SUMMER FIRE** also returns to preferred conditions, which is grass. He took a shot last time on dirt, did not fire, but figures as a contender off his runner-up turf sprint two back vs. 3yo claiming company. **BRIX** returns from a layoff of two and a half

months for a trainer whose fresh horses tend to fire. MANTARAY ISLAND needed his last start, which was his first in more than a year. Potential pacesetter?

Seventh Race

| 1. Mongolian Hero | 2. Bodega | 3. Speakerofthehouse |

MONGOLIAN HERO plummets to the bottom level for winners ($16k claiming, N2L). His recent speed figures stand out from the field. **BODEGA** lost ground start to finish last out, finishing fifth in a much better-than-looked effort first against winners. He was claimed from the effort by Phil D'Amato, who is 5-for-13 f.o.c. the past two years. BODEGA moves from post 8 to the rail, and is a must-use. **SPEAKEROFTHEHOUSE** finished an okay fourth last out in his first try at this class level. He will be grinding away late. GRYFFINDOR will pick them up late at a price.

Eighth Race

| 1. Charmingslew | 2. Magnificent Q T | 3. Hot On the Trail |

Looks like a wide-open Cal-bred filly-mare turf mile; **CHARMINGSLEW** gets the call. She finished next-to-last in her comeback, but has a history of improving second start back. She won this condition twice in the past year and a half; she runs for the optional $20k claim tag. **MAGNIFICENT Q T** delivered the two best performances of her career on the Del Mar turf course including a third last out when she benefitted from a slow pace. Similar pace scenario possible this race. **HOT ON THE TRAIL** seems best as a late-running sprinter, but her runner-up finish last out in a dirt route won by heavily favored A Melis was creditable.

Ninth Race

| 1. North Pole | 2. Defunded | 3. Wyfire |

NORTH POLE, a $1.05 million yearling, debuts with workouts that suggest he is ready to fire for trainer Simon Callaghan, who is 3-for-6 this year with debut 2-year-olds. 'POLE is sired by Pioneerof the Nile (13 percent winners from debut juveniles); the colt was produced by a stakes-winning dam that won her career debut. First-time starter **DEFUNDED** capped his work pattern with a bullet gate work last weekend in 59.60 seconds. His sire gets 9 percent debut winners from 2yos; the first four foals from his dam ae multiple winners. Bob Baffert-trained first-time starters generally are ready to fire. **WYFIRE** is the only starter with racing experience; he finished an okay fourth in his debut two weeks ago. Improvement likely second time out. MAN FRIDAY is the second Baffert entrant in this dirt race; progeny of American Pharoah often prefer turf.

Tenth Race

| 1. Pretty Point | 2. Don't Blame Judy | 3. Catch the Eye |

Based on her recent efforts from 10 to 11 furlongs, **PRETTY POINT** is the choice to win this filly-mare turf marathon. Third against similar two back, she blasted home last time out to win a N1X marathon with an impressive turn of late speed. That was over the Del Mar turf; she can win right back. **DON'T BLAME JUDY** finished in front of the top choice two back at 10 furlongs, followed by a decent third in a mile turf stakes here. It is true 'JUDY rarely wins (2-for-23, with 11 combined seconds and thirds), but she is most always in the hunt and her effort two back at 10 furlongs suggests another furlong is not an issue. **CATCH THE EYE** looms an upset candidate. She uncorked the race of her career two back, following by a N1X fourth against males that was nothing more than a prep for this filly-mare stakes. The longer, the better. She could slip through the cracks in the betting, as could OVER THINKING. The latter finished second in this race a year ago, and showed signs of returning to form last out with a high-figure fourth in a dirt stakes at Delaware. Over the years, trainer Victoria Oliver has been among the best longshot trainers in summer at Del Mar. She won this race in 2015 with $17.80 winner Honey Lake. SIBERIAN IRIS might be ranked too low by this handicapper. She won this race last summer, and finished second against the boys last time in a G3 marathon.

Eleventh Race

| 1. Poise to Strike | 2. Betito | 3. Cleveland Cat |

POISE TO STRIKE ran a winning race here opening weekend at this maiden-20 level, runner-up by head to Street Image, who returned to win again in his next start. 'STRIKE switches to a strong rider, and from an outside post figures for a front-running or pace-pressing trip. Basically, he can win if he runs two alike. **BETITO** is fast, based on the fractions he set in his debut in May. He faded after a half-mile in that special-weight, then returned to bomb at even-money in another special-weight at Pleasanton. Gelded since, plummeting to the bottom level, he should be a pace factor. **CLEVELAND CAT** has changed trainers since his last start in October, and also drops into the maiden-claiming ranks for the first time. BEDROCK adds blinkers after an okay third, nearly three lengths behind the top choice.