

Date: August 23rd, 2020

Track: Del Mar

By Brad Free

BEST BET: Vander Kelen (6th race)

First Race

1. High On Gin

2. Dehydration

3. Miss Important

The inside post is problematic for **HIGH ON GIN**, who nonetheless gets the call dropping into a claiming sprint for the first time. The figures she earned recently against allowance and stakes rivals are fast enough for this \$32k claiming race for 3yo fillies. Tough to win a dirt sprint this summer from an inside post, however. Into Friday, the rail was 1-for-40 from six to seven furlongs. **DEHYDRATION** wired older N3L claiming sprinters last time and was claimed. She might actually be facing an easier lineup in this age-restricted \$32k claiming sprint, though she picks up seven pounds and stretches out another furlong to six and a half. Kentucky shipper **MISS IMPORTANT** was purchased privately following her \$50k claiming N2L win two months ago. She shortens to a sprint and will rally late. **STREET FLYER** makes her local debut for a normally productive stable having an uncharacteristically tough season.

Second Race

1. Querelle

2. Holly Hundy

3. Gypsy Blu

QUERELLE might have been best last out in a similar N2X turf sprint, but she hopped when the gates opened and broke last, then rallied to second in a race won by the pacesetter. With a clean break, **QUERELLE** could have won. With a clean break, she can make amends running back at the same level. **HOLLY HUNDY** returns from a layoff of more than four months with recent works that suggest she will fire first start back. Her speed figures are close to par for this level. **GYPSY BLU** finished second or third all four starts at this N2X level. Her pace-pressing style suits the pace scenario. This field lacks much speed, 'BLU figures to be on top of tepid fractions. **GREAT RETURN** has run races that put her in the hunt. **WATCH ME BURN** adds speed.

Third Race

1. As Time Goes By

2. Flat Out Joy

3. Classy Ruler

AS TIME GOES BY makes her career debut at age 3 with a series of fast recent works and a glossy pedigree. The American Pharoah filly is a sibling to G1 winners Will Take Charge and Take Charge Indy. 'TIME earned the bullet three of her last five works, and appears fully cranked for her first start. **FLAT OUT JOY** returns from a layoff of a year and a half. She showed speed all three starts in early 2019; her works comeback works are fast. **CLASSY RULER** did not live up to high expectations last winter; this is her comeback race and she ran well first time out in her sprint debut on this track. Expect she will be outrun early and rally late.

Fourth Race

1. Into Victory

2. Dolci

3. True Mischief

This maiden-20 filly-mare route is a scramble. **INTO VICTORY** gets the tepid call, dropping for the first time into a maiden-claiming race and trying dirt for the first time in her fourth start. This certainly is an easier spot than the special-weight turf maidens she has been facing. Also-eligible entrants **DOLCI** and **TRUE MISCHIEF** have run races that put them in the hunt. **DOLCI** is a maiden-first-time-tag for a stable that does well with this move (8-for-34, \$2.81 ROI past five years). **TRUE MISCHIEF** finished second while more than four lengths clear of third last out in her first try at this level. **MIDNIGHT JAMBOREE** drops in class for the third start of her career.

Fifth Race

1. Hollywood Girl

2. Gypsy Spirit

3. Muchly

Most of these N1X turf fillies and mares have been stuck at the first condition for some time; it is a good spot to back a lightly raced filly with upside. **HOLLYWOOD GIRL** fits the description. The well-regarded Giant's Causeway filly, sibling to Santa Anita Derby winner Honor A.P., finished a better-than-looked sixth in her comeback three months ago. Off since, she has a history of running well fresh (debut winner), and her speed figures as a 3yo last year suggest she will be fast enough at age 4 to handle this N1X for older. She has raced only four times. **GYPSY SPIRIT** is 1-for-22, with 11 two-three finishes. However, her current form is undeniably sharp. She finished second as the favorite last out, the winner returned to finish second in a stakes race. **MUCHLY** adds blinkers and switches to the meet's leading turf rider Umberto Rispoli, while **SASSYSERB** moves up in class top face open company after a convincing Cal-bred N1X win.

Sixth Race

1. Vander Kelen

2. Mayan Warrior

3. Outlaw

VANDER KELEN figures tough to beat dropping from a highly rated starter allowance into a \$16k claiming sprint. He was in too tough last time, he fits perfect here. He drew an outside post, has the field's fastest numbers, and he won over this track last summer. The dropper looks rock solid for a stable that is reliable with dirt-sprint favorites (45 percent, past five years). **MAYAN WARRIOR** finished in front of the top choice last out, third while outrunning his

32-1 odds. He will pick them up late. **OUTLAW** drops a notch and is quick enough to make the lead if he wants; **MORE HONOR** figures as a contender based on his N3L win two starts back.

Seventh Race

1. Southern King**2. French Getaway****3. Hootie**

SOUTHERN KING found a mile and three-eighths too far and N2X rivals too tough last out, finishing last of five. He shortens to a mile and a sixteenth, his N1X win two back at a mile would be fast enough. **FRENCH GETAWAY**, a Del Mar turf horse for course (two wins) probably moved too soon last out. He rallied from last, made the lead in midstretch and then got collared. Solid return-to-form effort by the gelding, who will rally late. **HOOTIE** could vie for favoritism based on his victory over **GETAWAY** last out. **HOOTIE** is a difficult horse to ride, he tends to pull and get rank. But jockey Umberto Rispoli manages the gelding's idiosyncrasies; he won three of the last five times he rode him. **WORTHY TURK** might be ranked too low by this handicapper; he was blocked most of the final five-sixteenths last out in the race **GETAWAY** and **HOOTIE** exit. With a clean trip, **TURK** could make amends for his tough-trip fifth as the favorite.

Eighth Race

1. Needless to Say**2. Ensleys Dream****3. Smoothlikebuttah**

First-time starters **NEEDLESS TO SAY** and **ENSLEYS DREAM** top this sprint for Cal-bred maiden 2yo fillies. 'SAY debuts with a solid work pattern for trainer Dean Pederson, the filly is by win-early first-crop stallion Not This Time and produced by a stakes winner. **ENSLEYS DREAM**, sired by Smiling Tiger, makes her debut for Brian Koriner with a promising work tab. Her gate move Aug. 8 was sharp (viewed on XBTV.com). 'DREAM is a sibling to seven winners, three multiple winners. **SMOOTHLIKEBUTTAH** will pick them up late; her most recent third-place finish was the best of her four-start career. **SQUARED SHADEY** appears to have worked well for her debut.

Ninth Race

1. Galilean**2. Kiwi's Dream****3. Royal Ship**

After a pair of wins vs. Cal-breds, **GALILEAN** is ready for a return to graded stakes in a modest edition of the G2 Del Mar Mile. **GALILEAN** trounced dirt rivals two back, he had to work harder one month ago to win a turf stake by a half-length. But he earned a career-high figure, and the race was somewhat validated when runner-up Whooping Jay returned to win a state-bred N1X. This is a class test for **GALILEAN**, who holds a current-condition edge over several of his more-accomplished rivals. **KIWI'S DREAM** ran super finishing second last out in a restricted stakes at a mile on turf. He set the fastest reported fractions of the meet (:45.08 and 1:08.99), held sway until deep stretch and got collared late. Super effort by 'DREAM, who may only need to ration his speed in order to wire the field. **ROYAL SHIP** is a Group 1 winner from Brazil making his U.S. debut for a trainer who has had much success with similar imports. Although horses from the Southern hemisphere often need a race or two, this field did not come up that tough and the workouts by 'SHIP suggest he might just fire a big one first start back. **MO FORZA** is a multiple stakes winner in age-restricted races, but this is his first start since January. **BOB AND JACKIE** laid a head decision on **KIWI'S DREAM** last out and is 3-for-3 on the Del Mar turf. **SHARP SAMURAI** would be a top contender in this turf mile, but was expected to run Saturday in the Pacific Classic.

Tenth Race

1. Julius**2. St. Joe Bay****3. Express Train**

JULIUS would become the first three-time winner of the meet if he puts away **ST. JOE BAY**. Both veterans are qualified to win this N1X/optional \$40k claiming sprint. **JULIUS** blitzed his rivals both starts this meet, a runaway sprint victory followed by a front-running route win. He won by only a half-length, but that was after setting fast fractions. Back to a sprint, drawn outside, sharp gelding the one to catch. **ST. JOE BAY** is a veteran G2 winner banging around in the upper claiming ranks. 'BAY is a three-time winner over the Del Mar surface; he won this condition last out in front-running fashion. The difference between his win and the top choice is 'BAY got away with a relatively soft pace. The 8-for-40 veteran should be involved early. **EXPRESS TRAIN**, once considered a 2020 Derby prospect following a 14-length maiden route win on this track last summer, returns from a long layoff. He'll probably be outrun early, which is fine because the top pair have similar front-running styles. 'TRAIN will rally. This is only a comeback prep; he is lightly raced with his best races in front of him. **JAMMING EDDY** ran the fastest race of his career last time, runner-up at this level in his first try over the Del Mar main track.

Eleventh Race

1. K P D Day**2. Exeter****3. Perseverance**

Also-eligible **K P D DAY** ran very well in his fifth-place debut at a mile on turf. Three- and four-wide throughout, he rallied from last in a race dominated by speed, and galloped out big past the wire. Drawn outside again, where he might lose ground again, the maiden-50 gelding nonetheless gets the call to win his second career start. **EXETER** finished second in the same race, and though he was flattered by the slow pace/race shape (one-two pacesetters finished one-two), the effort marked another forward move by the improving colt. **PERSEVERANCE** drops for the first time into a maiden-claiming race, while adding blinkers and returning to the surface (turf) of his career-best effort two back. **SUMMER FUN** stretches back out to a two turns. Expect him to show speed partway at least.