

**Date:** September 7th, 2020

**Track:** Del Mar

**By Brad Free**

**BEST BET: Eddie's New Dream (6th race)**

**First Race**

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**1. My Journey**

**2. Bodega**

**3. Next Revolt**

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Closing day of Del Mar summer, first post 1 p.m. The maiden-20 victory two back by **MY JOURNEY** would be fast enough to handle this \$16k claiming N2L mile. The gelding was only prepping last out, while over his head finishing fifth at 38-1 in a starter allowance. He drops to the bottom, and can win by reproducing his maiden win. **BODEGA** enters with the highest last-out figure, earned finishing second last out in a similar low-level N2L. Each recent start has been better than the start before. Claimed last out, he adds blinkers. Expect him to rally late. **NEXT REVOLT** dominated maiden-20s last out in a performance that stacks up well with these. This is his third start in a month, however. **SURPRISE FASHION** goes sprint to route and should be forwardly placed in a race without much genuine speed.

**Second Race**

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**1. Mickelson**

**2. Keystone Field**

**3. Invictatus**

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**MICKELSON** returns from a long layoff with sharp works for a trainer whose older maiden comebackers are typically ready to fire (23 percent wins first start following six-month layoff). Trouble is, those maiden comebackers are typically undervalued in the betting (\$1.10 return per \$2 win wager). **MICKELSON** capped his pattern working a bullet half-mile, heads-up in company with highly regarded Cezzane. **KEYSTONE FIELD**, a 5yo making just the third start of his career, returns from a year-and-a-half layoff as a first-time gelding. He has been working well, in company, and should fire first start back. He possesses no sprint speed, but will be rolling late. **INVICTATUS** goes route to sprint after an even-paced fifth at a mile. Bullet work one week ago indicates he maintains his fitness level. This is his first sprint, in just his third start. The point is, he has a license to improve at this short distance. **DEFENSE WINS** has some speed, and also is a first-time gelding.

**Third Race**

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**1. Hot Rod Charlie**

**2. Union Soldier**

**3. Harlan Estate**

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With two sprints under his belt including an okay third last out on turf, **HOT ROD CHARLIE** gets the call stretching to a mile on turf. He had some early trouble last out, not bad, then raced evenly throughout in a race dominated by the two pacesetters. 'CHARLIE actually finished like a colt that will improve at this longer distance. Although he is a sibling to champion sprinter Mitole, he gets stamina from his sire Oxbow. Tab in a scramble. **UNION SOLDIER** could be the top prospect in the field, but this maiden turf mile has all the earmarks of a prep. A highly regarded son of Union Rags, 'SOLDIER is not particularly bred for turf, but long-term expectations are high. Win or lose, he is one to follow. **HARLAN ESTATE** finished an okay fourth in his debut, the same race the top choice exits. Second-start improvement likely. **HELIOCHROME** might be ranked too low by this handicapper. He is the only top contender with a two-turn race under his belt, a nose loss first time out. Will not hold the slow final time against him; 2yos tend to improve significantly with racing.

**Fourth Race**

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**1. Around the Dial**

**2. Rick's Dream**

**3. Black Storm**

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In a deep field of \$10k claiming sprinters, **AROUND THE DIAL** gets the call dropping from \$16k. He set/pressed a fast pace last time vs. tougher, and is drawn near the outside with an up-front style and facing slightly easier. **RICK'S DREAM** also benefits by a class drop. He was in tough last time in a starter allowance, yet ran well to split the field at 102-1 odds. This \$10k claiming field is his level. **BLACK STORM** will roll late as one of the top contenders. The in-form gelding finished second last out; he has won five of his last 16 starts and is a must-use from off the pace. Also-eligible **COUNTRY ROAD** would be shipping from Golden Gate off a series of creditable races. The knock is his 44 starts produced just three wins, 16 two-three finishes. **KING PARKER** will rally late; **AWHITESPORTSCOAT** figures off his \$8k claiming win two back.

**Fifth Race**

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**1. Kleen Karma**

**2. Empress of Fire**

**3. On Mars**

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Sharp claiming winner **KLEEN KARMA**, or sharp maiden winner **EMPRESS OF FIRE**? The evenly matched fillies square off against big-margin maiden winner **ON MARS** in a competitive Cal-bred turf mile. The call is **KLEEN KARMA**, who chased a fast pace and drew off in her first start on the Del Mar turf and first under Flavien Prat. Not sure what she had behind her however, because the 2-3-4 finished off the board next out. Nonetheless, 'KARMA has improved each recent start and gets the call over **EMPRESS OF FIRE**. But it's close, because 'FIRE has made only two career starts and pretty much dominated maidens last out winning by more than two and a half lengths. Who did she beat? Perhaps not much. The second-through-ninth finishers ran back, none won. 'FIRE will be ridden by Umberto Rispoli, who entered the weekend having won 33 of the 112 turf races at Del Mar this summer (Rispoli 33-for-100 on turf into Saturday). Flavien Prat is the second-leading turf rider this meet with 17 turf wins into Saturday. **ON MARS** finally put it all together with a dominating maiden win by more than four lengths last out in the sixth start of her career. She ran her final quarter-mile in a blazing 22.93 seconds. **HARPER'S GALLOP** finished second at this level last out and might be ranked too low by this handicapper.

**Sixth Race**

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**1. Eddie's New Dream****2. Ensleys Dream****3. Big Stretch**

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Closing day is mandatory payout in the pick six; this sprint for Cal-bred maiden 2yos is the first leg. **EDDIE'S NEW DREAM** should be tough if she has better racing luck than her debut. She broke behind the field, but produced a solid late kick to finish second. That race was five and a half; she wants every bit of this six-furlong trip. Potential standout. **ENSLEYS DREAM** wheels back in two weeks after an okay runner-up debut. She earned a higher figure than the top choice, and the trainer of 'DREAM has won with 27 percent of his second-start maidens the past five years (18 for 67, flat-bet profit). **BIG STRETCH** has worked well for her debut, while **COMPLETE CONTROL** goes route to sprint and will be rolling late.

**Seventh Race**

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**1. Tropical Terror****2. Luvluv****3. N. K. Rocket Man**

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Who will beat **TROPICAL TERROR** this time? The nine-start maiden finished in the money seven starts including runner-up finishes five of his last six. Beaten favorite four times, he continues to run fast enough to win a Cal-bred maiden turf route such as this. He missed by a nose last out. This looks like his easiest chance yet, but he is tough to trust. **LUVLUV** finished a flat fifth in his comeback, more than two lengths behind the top choice. But it was his first start in seven months, LUVLUV has a right to improve second start back. **N. K. ROCKET MAN** ran better than the line looks in his fourth-place debut in a turf sprint. He was shuffled back at the three-eighths, raced greenly and maintained position through the lane. Solid debut, bred to run long.

**Eighth Race**

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**1. Magic At Midnight****2. Happier****3. Been Studying Her**

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The blazingly fast **MAGIC AT MIDNIGHT** won her first three starts setting hot fractions; she dusted N1X turf sprinters last out and now switches to dirt as the one to catch at the same class level. She won on this surface last summer, so footing is not an issue. Come catch her. Debut winner **HAPPIER** dominated maidens last out and looms the main threat. **HAPPIER** could get a cozy trip positioned second, and if the top choice falters, **HAPPIER** would be first to attack. **BEEN STUDYING HER** goes from inside to outside and will be running late, while **SUMMER LOVE** is sprinting for the first time and also should produce a rally.

**Ninth Race**

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**1. Rombauer****2. Caisson****3. Inner Ghost**

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The sharp debut tally by **ROMBAUER** stamps him the one to beat in this turf stakes for 2yos. He came home in 22.93 seconds, and pretty much left **CAISSON** in his dust. However, **CAISSON** came back to win a maiden race despite a 24.17-second final quarter. Blinkers on, he has a right to improve. **INNER GHOST** ships from the East Coast off a debut sprint win. Well-bred, should improve running long. Tough post, however. **AMBIVALENT** switches to turf while making his third start in a month; **BIG FISH** found his home on grass last out with a sharp maiden win vs. Calbreds.

**Tenth Race**

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**1. Dr. Schivel****2. Spielberg****3. Weston**

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A fast, visually impressive maiden victory stamps **DR. SCHIVEL** the one to beat in the G1 Del Mar Futurity. As if he needed any more assistance beyond status as fastest in the field, he gained an extra advantage at the draw. He landed the cozy outside post, where he could get the same pressing/stalking trip he used in his 86-Beyer maiden win. **DR. SCHIVEL** has worked well since the victory, he is a relatively seasoned colt (three starts) on his way up, and should be tough to beat. **SPIELBERG** was the odds-on favorite first out, finishing more than five lengths behind the top choice. But 2yos from this stable tend to improve with racing, and if **SPIELBERG** improves likewise he should at least narrow the gap on the top choice if not score an outright upset. Inside post no bargain, of course. **WESTON** is two-for-two including a G2, and though he does not run "fast" based on figures, his grit and determination are admirable. **DIXIE'S TWO STENTS** missed by a head in a highly rated race first time out. He enters with the field's second-highest figure, and second-best post. He is drawn directly inside the favorite.

**Eleventh Race**

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**1. Klondike Creek****2. Shadow Sphinx****3. Three Ay Em**

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The strange 2020 summer season at Del Mar ends with a \$25k claiming turf mile; class-drop comebacker **KLONDIKE CREEK** gets the call. He has run well throughout his career while facing better company; he also runs well fresh. First start in more than three months, the veteran gelding is spotted for a top try first start back. Also-eligible **SHADOW SPHINX** misfired as the favorite last out in an allowance race; he returns to the claiming ranks and would only need to run back to his previous start to be a contender even from the outside post. **THREE AY EM** also returns to the claiming ranks; his close fifth two back in a Cal-bred stakes race puts him right in the hunt. **AVALANCHE** also has run races that are fast enough for this class level. That's a wrap for Del Mar, daytime Thoroughbred racing in Southern California resumes Sept. 19, opening day of the Santa Anita autumn meet.