

**Date:** August 6th, 2021**Track:** Del Mar**By Brad Free****BEST BET: Smash Ticket (7th race)****First Race****1. Gregory's Pride****2. Cali Bay****3. Kazuhiko**

Based on third-place finishes in fall-winter, comebacker **GREGORY'S PRIDE** is the one to beat in this maiden turf sprint. He missed by a head on the Del Mar turf first out, followed by an improved effort behind subsequent Santa Anita Derby winner Rock Your World. That maiden race produced four next-out winners; 'PRIDE returns with sharp works and speed to be forwardly placed on a course that has been kind to speed (sprints only). Six of the last 10 turf sprints were won gate to wire. 'PRIDE is trained by Phil D'Amato, who also starts comeback closer **CALI BAY**. The latter finished willingly in his runner-up U.S. debut, and though five furlongs is a bit short, he will be rolling late. **KAZUHIKO**, a \$1.2 million yearling who placed in a G3 in Australia in his debut in spring 2020 before he tailed off in fall, adds Lasix for his U.S. debut. He has worked in company with stakes winner Dogtag and G2 winner Royal Ship, and though reluctant to switch leads in those dirt works (viewed on XBTV.com), KAZUHIKO might prefer grass. Intriguing prospect for Richard Mandella.

**Second Race****1. Kristi's Tiger****2. Li'l Grazen****3. Takethediamondlane**

**KRISTI'S TIGER** is comfortably drawn outside in this Cal-bred allowance sprint, racing over a DMR main track on which she won last summer at two turns. A state-bred allowance winner two back, she retains eligibility because the win was on turf. Pressing style, proven at the level, advantageous post, much to like. However, she faces a formidable rival in **LI'L GRAZEN**, a four-time winner at this condition. She is entered for the optional \$20k claim tag, is a three-time winner at DMR, and earned figures higher than the top choice. Inside post no bargain, however. The rail is 2-for-44 (into Thursday, all dirt sprint distances combined). **TAKETHEDIAMONDLANE** returns from a long layoff to run over a track on which she won her debut. **TIZ A MASTER** also returns from a layoff for a trainer-jockey combo that is 6-for-21 the past four months.

**Third Race****1. Bobby Bo****2. Magnificent****3. Fenway**

One more chance for **BOBBY BO**, who lost his first two starts at odds-on. Both were sprints won by stablemates. 'BO ran well two weeks ago, runner-up with a decent 81 Beyer. Now he stretches out, and might be gone. **MAGNIFICENT** has something the top choice lacks, which is two-turn experience. His runner-up finish last out was better than looked. He steadied sharply on first turn, pulled forward to chase while unrelaxed, and was no match for odds-on stablemate Beyond Brilliant. **MAGNIFICENT** finished more than four clear of third. Decent second start by an improving maiden. **FENWAY** was well-regarded early this year, but lost his first four starts. A stablemate of the top choice, **FENWAY** is likely to have improved since his winter-spring campaign and could get a cozy trip. If his stablemate sets the pace, **FENWAY** could find himself alone in second position. Or, he could go on with it and set the pace from the rail. **WHO'S THE STAR** adds blinkers and stretches out.

**Fourth Race****1. Zabava****2. Clearly Gone****3. Mad Grace**

**ZABAVA** is a consummate pro, 9-for-27 on turf and seeking her third straight at this \$25k claiming level. Her closing style suits the course profile. **CLEARLY GONE**, one-two half her 16 turf starts, was fully extended to win a restricted claiming race more than four months ago. It was not the fastest win of her career, but she has been freshened since, and returns to a course on which she is a two-time winner. **MAD GRACE**, five-time winner in the East and Midwest, merits an upset chance, first start off the claim by high-percent f.o.c. claim trainer Jonathan Wong and with a hot rider. Kyle Frey entered the week 8-for-35. His 22 percent win rate is second-highest in the colony (Flavien Prat leads with 28 percent). **PERFECT ICE STORM** has speed and creditable dirt figs; **SUGARY** is a three-time turf winner at DMR; **ELLIE ARROWAY** will push the pace.

**Fifth Race****1. Connie Swingle****2. Big Novel****3. Spoiled Rotten**

Debut runner-up **CONNIE SWINGLE** looks tough in this sprint for Cal-bred 2yo maidens. She raced greenly first out, ran well to miss by a half-length, and worked well since. Tab for major improvement second out. The filly she lost to (Drizella) was entered in the CTBA Stakes (race 7) on Friday. **BIG NOVEL** debuts with a solid work pattern for a productive trainer-jockey tandem. John Sadler and Umberto Rispoli have won at a 24 percent clip (22 for 91) the past year. 'NOVEL is a full sibling to modest maiden winner Big Story. First-time starter **SPOILED ROTTEN** posted a series of fast works at San Luis Rey Downs and figures as a contender. Also-eligible firster **BONNIE BRAE** is a sibling to stakes winner Desmond Doss and five other multiple winners.

### Sixth Race

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#### 1. Steak and Cheese

#### 2. Racetrackers

#### 3. Ox Bridge

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Shipper **STEAK AND CHEESE** fits perfect in this \$32k claiming turf mile, restricted to non-winners of two. His maiden win last out at Indiana Grand was validated when the runner-up returned to win a MSW; trainer Mike Maker has an outstanding record with last-out maiden winners in turf-route claiming races: 14-for-32 the past three-plus years. In other words, Maker strategically places last-out maiden winners. The locals in this field look mostly the same, although **RACETRACKERS** has improved since stretching out. He finished fourth two back, second last out. He might benefit cutting back from nine furlongs to one mile. **OX BRIDGE** was eliminated at the break when he stumbled badly opening day. He is quick enough to set/press the pace. Sooner or later, the anti-speed course profile is likely to dissipate.

### Seventh Race

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#### 1. Smash Ticket

#### 2. Elm Drive

#### 3. At the Spa

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The maiden romp by second-start 2yo filly **SMASH TICKET** opening week stamps her most likely winner of this historically predictable G2. 'TICKET did not break particularly well, unleashed a burst of speed to press two-wide, made the lead on the turn, and ran away to win by five lengths with the highest figure (78 Beyer) of the season by a West Coast 2yo filly. Favorites won this stakes race four of the last six years, and though the inside post (2 of 11) is a potential challenge, she enters a simply the fastest in the field. Probably cannot afford another tardy takeoff against this better field, however. **ELM DRIVE** won her debut by eight lengths, and worked well since including two solid works at DMR. She will apply pressure from the outside. **AT THE SPA**, cross-entered Friday in the CTBA Stakes, is a two-for-two stakes winner with speed.

### Eighth Race

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#### 1. Lady O'Prado

#### 2. Katla

#### 3. Summer Rose

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**LADY O'PRADO** stretches to her preferred two-turn trip after a tough-trip (stumbled start) sprint third last out. Her best races are routes, she should be forwardly placed. Speed has been effective in dirt routes. **KATLA** drops from \$25k claiming N2L to rock-bottom \$16k N2L and returns to her preferred footing, which seems to be dirt. Last-out maiden-claiming winner **SUMMER ROSE** adds speed, and fits with these low-level claiming winners though she has gotten wobbly in deep stretch both routes. **ZABRA** trounced maidens last out in the 27th start of her career. She enters with the highest last-out dirt figure.