

Date: August 14th, 2021**Track:** Del Mar**By Brad Free****BEST BET: Carpe Fortuna (6th race)****First Race****1. Launch Pad****2. Mr. Pickles****3. Achilles**

The recent third-place finish by **LAUNCH PAD** was better than it appears; with a clean trip adding blinkers he can win this claiming route for 3yos. 'PAD stumbled at the break, recovered, raced inside, lost position and dropped back on the far turn, then re-rallied for third and actually galloped out in front. Good effort sets him up for a win vs. similar. **MR. PICKLES** arrives from Northern California in decent form. He won a four-runner race last out, his third career win and second win from his last three starts. Contender. **ACHILLEUS** has been facing better older rivals, and finishing nowhere. Now back with 3yos, he will rally late. **LANGUAGE BARRIER** misfired in his California debut, but switches to top journeyman rider Kyle Frey. Improvement possible.

Second Race**1. Storm the Bastille****2. Irish Heatwave****3. Jasikan**

Not only did **STORM THE BASTILLE** finish second against similar claiming turf milers last out, he did it the hard way over a Del Mar turf he clearly prefers. He was forwardly placed behind a strong pace, challenged for the lead late, got run over by a horse that rallied from last and galloped out willingly past the wire. Solid effort, and timely \$25k claim by trainer Adam Kitchingman. The added half-furlong helps. **IRISH HEATWAVE** drops slightly, from a close fifth in a N1X. He is a five-time winner on turf, although six turf starts at DMR produced only a single third-place finish. Despite the possibility he prefers other courses, he figures as a contender; five of his eight rivals exit the same race in which the top choice finished second. **JASIKAN** makes his first start in six months. He won the Oceanside Stakes opening day 2019, and how drops to the lowest level of his career, \$25k claiming. **FRENCH GETAWAY** will pick them up late, again.

Third Race**1. Vegan****2. Bella Renella****3. Dozo**

Trainer Bill Spawr starts two contenders: likely favorite **VEGAN** and upset candidate **BELLA RENELLA**. The runner-up finish by **VEGAN** last out was flattered when the third-place finisher returned to win. **VEGAN** moves to a cozy outside post, returns at the same \$25k claiming N3L level, and is racing over the DMR track on which she won a maiden race two years ago. **BELLA RENELLA** has an upset chance, first off the Spawr claim for \$12.5k and also exiting a live race. She finished third, the one-two finishers won next out. **DOZO** is speed. She misfired opening weekend, but her fast-pace fourth-place comeback two starts ago gives her a shot to steal it. **SUMMER LOVE** drops in class, returns to dirt and should be running late.

Fourth Race**1. Querelle****2. She's Our Charm****3. She's So Special**

A sprinter much of her career, **QUERELLE** has run well enough in routes to get the nod in this turf mile. Runner-up in a turf-sprint stakes last month, she drops to N2X/N3L while stretching out. Her fifth in a G3 two starts back was okay, perhaps enough for this allowance. **SHE'S OUR CHARM** harnessed her speed last time and ran one of her better races, finishing second behind next-out stakes winner Laura's Light. 'CHARM, previously a pure front-runner, may need to ration her speed again this time. The DMR turf course was anti-speed the first four weeks of the season. **SHE'S SO SPECIAL**, stablemate of the top choice, drops from a stakes race. Though she might prefer to sprint, this mile trip could be within reach. **QUIET SECRETARY** ran super one month ago, setting the pace and holding second in a N2X allowance. She benefits by the shorter mile distance, but front-runners have had a tough go this summer in turf routes.

Fifth Race**1. Sugar Sugar****2. Baby Steps****3. Ruby Ray**

Based on a creditable third-place debut in a maiden special-weight, **SUGAR SUGAR** is the proper favorite dropping to \$150k maiden-claiming for a trainer who wins often with this type. The past five years, Peter Miller is 21-for-79 (27 percent) with 2yo second-start maidens. **BABY STEPS** enters with an upset chance, second out after a creditable MSW midpack debut. She chased from fifth, raced wide

and went evenly in a useful prep. Now she drops in class, with a race under her belt. **RUBY RAY** is speed. She dueled with fast, talented Smash Ticket last time, and cracked. This is an easier spot.

Sixth Race

1. Carpe Fortuna

2. Thrilling

3. Cecile's Chapter

The third-place comeback by **CARPE FORTUNA** was better than it looks, and sets her up as most probable Saturday winner second following a four-month layoff. Although the DMR turf favored closers (routes) the first month, late-runner 'FORTUNA caught a rare pro-speed "race flow" that negated her rally. The winner led gate to wire, the fillies positioned closest to her finished fourth and second. 'FORTUNA was the only closer to make up ground, third by a length while running another final quarter-mile in less than 24 seconds. With a comeback under her belt, she can sit back and blast home for the win in this N1X for 3yo fillies. Lightly raced **THRILLING** is stuck outside (post 12 of 12), but appears to have a touch of class and is making just her third start. Debut sprint winner, allowance runner-up second out, the Uncle Mo filly is bred to run long. Her dam was a G1 winner long on turf. **CECILE'S CHAPTER**, third in three successive claiming miles, will be rolling late. **BURGOO ALLEY** finished in front of the top choice last out while benefitting from the flow.

Seventh Race

1. Gerlach's

2. Irondale

3. Wearenotbadpeople

GERLACH'S returns to preferred footing as the one to beat in this apparently weak race for older Cal-bred maidens. His three dirt sprints produced two seconds and a third. He misfired on turf last out, but is back on dirt for his third start of the meet. He can wear them down from slightly off the pace. Maybe. **IRONDALE** was in tough vs. open special-weight maidens, but returns to the state-bred ranks. His runner-up finish two back vs. a similar bunch makes him a contender. **WEARENOTBADPEOPLE** has worked well for his debut, while **FAST BUCK** also debuts with apparently sharp works at Los Alamitos.

Eighth Race

1. Rideforthecause

2. Neige Blanche

3. Ippodamia's Girl

Stakes winners **RIDEFORTHECAUSE** and **NEIGE BLANCHE** traded decisions at Santa Anita; they look equally matched into this Del Mar marathon turf stakes. **RIDEFORTHECAUSE** improved each start this year including a restricted stakes win last out over her main rival, and a G3 runner-up behind that rival two back. Proven over distances comparable to this mile-and-three-eighths trip, 'CAUSE gets the nod in a close call. **NEIGE BLANCHE** defeated the top choice two back, and finished three-quarters behind that rival last out. 'BLANCHE, G3 winner in France and the U.S., has improved this year at long distances and has targeted this race for two months. The top pair are tough to separate. **IPPODAMIA'S GIRL** won a restricted turf stakes here three weeks ago at a mile, which was her second win over the DMR course. She won a maiden race here in 2017. A mile and three-eighths will be uncharted territory for 'GIRL, but she likes the course and should be rolling late. **RED LARK**, G1 Del Mar Oaks winner last summer, drops from G1 and also will be finishing fast.

Ninth Race

1. Letsgetlucky

2. Catemaco

3. Big Story

Third in a Cal-bred 3yo stake last out, **LETSGETLUCKY** drops into a Cal-bred N1X vs. older and can win if he avoids a duel with the potential pace rival on the rail. 'LUCKY has faced good Cal-bred stakes company, he hit the board all four starts, and benefits by the shorter 6f distance after dueling and tiring last out at 7f. **CATEMACO** is the potential pace rival. His comeback was better than the seventh-place finish position indicates. He was trying turf and racing for the first time since his fast-pace debut victory Jan. 1, lacked speed, but finished evenly without being asked, and galloped out with run after the wire. It was a perfect prep for a colt whose highly rated debut win would be fast enough to beat these. Expect him to show speed returning to dirt. He was ridden both starts by Juan Hernandez, who jumps to comeback gelding **BIG STORY**. The latter is favorably drawn outside for his first start in six months, and should get a comfortable stalking trip outside in the clear. **I'LL STAND TALLER** finished second in a similar race last out.

Tenth Race

1. Isn't She Lovely

2. Lalic

3. Nu Pi Lambda

ISN'T SHE LOVELY benefits by a soft pace scenario in this N1X turf sprint; the lightly raced comeback filly should be near the lead in a field surprisingly short on speed. 'LOVELY is naturally quick, runs fresh, and could find herself setting or pressing a modest tempo. Speed was powerful in turf sprints the first four weeks of summer. **LALIC** will rally late as she shortens to her preferred sprint trip. She tried a mile last time and finished last; she previously won three consecutive sprints. Though not fast early, she will roll late. **NU PI LAMBDA** ran well finishing third in a similar spot one month ago. She had to wait for room on the turn, then finished willingly. Good effort. The

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challenge is she is not quick, and drew the rail. XMAS SURPRISE has speed to be within range of the top choice. ANNA FANTASTIC has run races that put her in the hunt. Also-eligible FANTASY HEAT might be ranked too low. A DMR horse-for-course, this would be her first since September. Definite contender if she starts, perhaps should be ranked higher.