

Date: August 29th, 2021

Track: Del Mar

By Brad Free

BEST BET: Ready Soul (3rd race)

First Race

1. Miss Kitness

2. It's a Riddle

3. Mongolian Window

MISS KITNESS goes sprint to route, \$25k claiming to \$10k, and catches a soft field of fillies and mares for her second start after a six-month layoff. She set the pace and tired in her sprint comeback, now stretches out with speed to set or press the pace. Tough to beat if she runs back to either route in winter at Santa Anita. **IT'S A RIDDLE** did not have a particularly good trip 10 days ago in a low-level claiming sprint, finishing third by a length and a half while starting for the first time in nearly three months. This mile race is the first try around two turns for **RIDDLE**, whose trainer Bob Hess Jr. entered the weekend having won with 3 of his last 6 starters. **MONGOLIAN WINDOW** could vie for favoritism based on speed figures she earned her last two starts. She finished third by 14+ lengths, second by six lengths, yet earned the highest last-out figs in the field. **WINDOW** was claimed last out, adds blinkers, and is a definite contender.

Second Race

1. Kitten's Kid

2. Delta Wind

3. Beautiful World

KITTEN'S KID earned a low figure (43 Beyer) finishing second in her runner-up debut on turf; **DELTA WIND** also did not run fast (56) finishing second on turf last out. Both can improve moving to dirt. **KITTEN'S KID**, sibling to stakes winner Mr. Hinx and three other winners, raced evenly and missed by a length in her debut. Although the final time and corresponding figure were slow, older maidens trained by Peter Miller generally improve second time out. **DELTA WIND** failed to produce her customary speed last out, perhaps she was uncomfortable with the footing. Her first three starts were dirt, she ran well all three including a pair of runner-up finishes at Los Alamitos and SA that would be fast enough to win this. Improvement likely as she returns to preferred footing. **BEAUTIFUL WORLD** debuts with fast works at Los Al; likewise **PIAZZETTA** at San Luis Rey.

Third Race

1. Ready Soul

2. Galilean

3. Wound Tight

READY SOUL can upset five-time Cal-bred stakes winner **GALILEAN** in this N2X turf mile. **READY SOUL** improved after relocating to California for new trainer Phil D'Amato; the colt followed his sharp N1X mile victory with a better-than-looked fourth last out at a mile and one-eighth. The race was surprisingly dominated by up-front runners (1-2-3 finishes rallied from 3-1-4 positions), **SOUL** flew his final three furlongs in :35.07. Solid effort under the circumstances. Now he shortens to a mile, and can blast home for the win as "best bet" on the Sunday card. He faces a formidable rival. **GALILEAN** is the most accomplished in the field, second start after an eight-month layoff. He encountered some traffic in his comeback, blocked from the quarter pole into the lane, but it did not cost him the win. It was an okay try off the bench, he faces easier second start back. Potential favorite. **WOUND TIGHT** drops from the same stakes race, he finished fourth after pressing the pace to deep stretch. He is a potential pacesetter.

Fourth Race

1. Surely Spectacular

2. Smart Monique

3. Workin Ninetofive

The inside post is not a great draw for **SURELY SPECTACULAR**, but she ran okay from the rail finishing second last out in a similar Cal-bred maiden-50. A three-start maiden who has improved each start, her grinding style suggests she will handle the longer distance of this six-furlong sprint. **SMART MONIQUE** ran better than the line looks last out, third behind the top choice. She broke slowly, last away from the gate, worked her way forward saving ground, challenged **SPECTACULAR** into the lane, then lost her punch late. One could argue that with a clean break **MONIQUE** would have finished second. She is gradually improving; she finished third all three starts. First-time starter **WORKIN NINETOFIVE** appears to have trained okay. Progeny of first-crop sire Stanford won 4 of 14 first time out.

Fifth Race

1. Warfront Fighter

2. Try to Capture

3. Circle Back

WARFRONT FIGHTER, a 17-start maiden making his California debut, looks like the one to beat in this bottom-level maiden-20. He finished in the money his last seven starts in New York, his speed figures top the field. **TRY TO CAPTURE** and **CIRCLE BACK** are first-time starters from outfits that occasionally win with debut maiden-claiming runners. **TRY TO CAPTURE** debuts for leading trainer Peter Miller with workouts that suggest he fits; **CIRCLE BACK** debuts for trainer Dean Pederson; his last 8 debut maiden-claiming runners produced 3 wins and 3 seconds. **COGNAC CAT** also hails from a stable that pops every so often with maiden-claiming firsters; trainer David Hofmans is 7-for-24 with MCL debut runners the past five years.

Sixth Race

1. Mesut

2. Grit and Curiosity

3. Mr Vargas

First start in nearly eight months, **MESUT** can win this entry-level allowance/optional claiming turf sprint. He runs well fresh, has run well against better, and won this condition two years ago. He is eligible because he entered for the optional \$40k tag. Workout pattern suggests he is ready to roll first start back

at age 7. **GRIT AND CURIOSITY** won his comeback 17 days ago, rallying from last to win a \$32k claiming turf sprint despite the pacesetter setting relatively easy splits. Looks like more speed in this field, which flatters his closing style. **MR VARGAS** ran like he needed the start in his comeback three weeks ago. He set the pace to deep stretch and tired to fourth. A graded winner early in his career, the five-time winner now runs for a \$40k tag and could pose an elusive target second start back from a layoff. **JAMMING EDDY** finished second last out under similar conditions; **PERFECTIONISTIC** finished fourth. Both will be rolling late.

Seventh Race

1. Bella Vita

2. Big Sweep

3. Melting Snow

BELLA VITA looks tough in this N1X sprint, based on recent form against top company. She dueled and tired to fourth last out while racing above her eligibility in a N2X. She previously chased Grade 1 winners Gamine and Ce Ce, and finished behind subsequent graded winner Private Mission. No such rivals in this entry-level allowance, and after drawing the rail last out she gets a better post (6 of 9). Fastest in the field, the one to beat. **BIG SWEEP** is a two-time Cal-bred stakes winner who dead-heated with the top choice two starts back. Not sure what to make of her most recent start, however. **SWEEP** finished second at even-money, without a visible alibi, while earning an ordinary figure. She must improve to compete with the top choice again. **MELTING SNOW** is a five-time winner moving up in class to face older after a sharp win in a \$40k claiming sprint for 3yo fillies.

Eighth Race

1. Keep Dancing

2. Big Clare

3. She's a Dime

Deep closer **KEEP DANCING**, who is likely to trail early, can win this Cal-bred allowance turf mile rallying from last. Her third last out over this course was super. She ran faster each successive quarter-mile, finished super and missed by a head. Her late style has been effective in turf routes all summer. **DANCING** can make the last run and get up. **BIG CLARE** finished a head in front of the top choice last out while earning the best number in her seven-start career. She will be positioned in front of the top choice, and get first run. Dirt specialist **SHE'S A DIME** might be distance-challenged on turf. Her up-front style is more effective on the main track, but she could be loose on the lead if also-eligible **NICE ICE** and **SUPER GAME** do not draw in.

Ninth Race

1. Rock Your World

2. Medina Spirit

3. Stilleto Boy

Santa Anita Derby winner **ROCK YOUR WORLD** and Kentucky Derby first-across-the-wire **MEDINA SPIRIT** are tough to separate in this \$100k stakes race. **ROCK YOUR WORLD** was initially targeted for the Del Mar Derby on turf, but has trained so well on the DMR dirt that his comeback was moved up. Tactical speed, drawn outside his main rival, he can win with a pressing trip. **MEDINA SPIRIT**, runner-up to the top choice at Santa Anita before wiring the Kentucky Derby, makes his first start since May with solid workouts over the DMR track. Coin flip between the top pair. Iowa Derby winner **STILLETO BOY** ran okay in his California debut, setting the pace to deep stretch in a G2 on turf. He returns to his preferred surface, and figures as a front-running contender based on his fast dirt win two back at Prairie Meadows. **WILLY THE COBBLER** will pick up the pieces at a price, in a race likely to unfold at a solid tempo.

Tenth Race

1. Crash Corrigan

2. Big Summer

3. Surplus

CRASH CORRIGAN, runner-up four of eight starts on dirt, switches to turf as the one to beat in this Cal-bred MSW turf sprint. Sired by Grazen, he should relish the footing. He ran relatively fast while finishing second in three successive dirt races at this level in winter and spring. **BIG SUMMER** rallied from seventh to miss by only a neck behind a front-running winner in an okay runner-up comeback. Post 10 is a challenge in turf sprints on this course, however: 4-for-75 the past decade. **SURPLUS**, beaten favorite last out vs. similar, adds blinkers and switchers riders.