Date: August 13th, 2022   **Track:** Del Mar

By Brad Free

BEST BET: Dandy Warhol (8th race)

First Race

1. Conundrum	2. Multi Platinum	3. Baladi

CONUNDRUM shortens to seven furlongs after a respectable third last out at one mile. Although he has well in routes, he might prefer this one-turn trip. His figures are appropriate for this level, he can win by reeling in likely pacesetter **MULTI PLATINUM**. The latter wheels back one week after a blowout maiden-40 win. Claimed by Steve Knapp from Bob Baffert, the colt is likely to make the lead and could be long gone if he reproduces last week's maiden win. Win or lose, he looks like the one to catch. **BALADI** returns to dirt for his first start in nearly three months. His best races were on "fast" dirt in the Midwest, his two starts in California both were on turf and both were okay. He had a tough trip in an allowance route, then finished a respectable third in a sprint. He might prefer the main track. WALL STREET TRADER, runaway winner of a maiden-20 route, is likely to be forwardly placed.

Second Race

1. Big Hopes	2. Organic	3. Just a Little Luck

First-time starter 2yo filly **BIG HOPES** has trained like she will fire first out. She outworked a mate in a gate drill Aug. 3, then came back with a bullet half in :47.60 this week. Progeny of Mr. Big have won 15 percent first out at age 2; BIG HOPES is a full sibling to debut runner-up/second-start maiden winner Big Flame. BIG HOPES did not draw well, but she looks like the one to beat despite the inside post. **ORGANIC** pressed and tired in her debut, and now adds blinkers for her second start and is quick enough to engage early. With a race under her belt, the speedy filly should improve a ton. **JUST A LITTLE LUCK** finished a respectable third in her career debut at Pleasanton; the one-two finishers returned to win four- and five-runner fields. FUN MONEY adds blinkers after an okay runner-up finish in her first start this meet.

Third Race

1. Rhetoric	2. Crash Corrigan	3. Good Vibes Only

Lightly raced **RHETORIC** crushed maidens by six lengths last month at Los Alamitos, trained well since at DMR, and is drawn outside his only apparent pace rival. RHETORIC ran well in his debut on this track last summer, this is only the third career start for the son of Quality Road. Up the ladder. **CRASH CORRIGAN** is a pro with 5 wins and 6 seconds from 20 starts including a highly rated Cal-bred win last out. 'CORRIGAN has improved since he was claimed by Lorenzo Ruiz; his closing style keeps him out of the way of the top choice. **GOOD VIBES ONLY** is the aforementioned pace rival for the top choice. 'VIBES pressed and tired opening weekend in a N1X that was stronger than this N1X. He shortens from six and one-half furlongs to six, and should be involved early. 'VIBES is trained by John Sadler, who also entered the late-runner REDLINE.

Fourth Race

1. Neptune's Storm	2. Shadow Sphinx	3. Count of Amazonia

Past-class veteran **NEPTUNE'S STORM**, a multiple stakes-winning gelding, drops to $50k claiming following an okay comeback in a N2X. He missed by less than three lengths while racing for the first time since autumn. The 6yo is on the downside of his career, but he is an eight-time winner and picks up hot rider Hector Berrios. **SHADOW SPHINX** drops from the same race as the top choice; 'SPHINX finished seventh at a distance beyond his preference. He shortens to a mile, also drops, and will be flying late. He is an 11-time winner, including two over the DMR turf. **COUNT OF AMAZONIA** had a tough trip finishing third last out and was claimed. Major rider switch to Umberto Rispoli. SEATTLE BOLD drops and has speed, but the stretch-out sprinter to his direct inside could mess up plans to make the lead.

Fifth Race

1. Superman Shaq	2. Sonic Brees	3. Quick Intro

SUPERMAN SHAQ shortens to five and one-half furlongs following a super effort at six and one-half. He broke from the rail, dueled inside two longshots, put those away, fought back late and finished third. Now he gets off the rail, at a shorter distance, and can win with a

pace-setting or pace-pressing trip. **SONIC BREES** finished in front of the top pick last out, runner-up in his first try at this low level ($16k claiming N2L). Obvious contender. Also-eligible **QUICK INTRO** drops and has some speed, while HEAVEN'S MUSIC drops and shortens from a route.

Sixth Race

1. Going Global	2. Flippant	3. Avenue de France

The class and high weight of this G2 turf route, **GOING GLOBAL** returns to the course on which she won a fast G2 in fall and G1 Del Mar Oaks a year ago. 'GLOBAL finished third as the favorite last out at Santa Anita, but she had an alibi. She was uncomfortable while keen and bottled up inside and behind rivals, then failed to quicken when room developed. This turf-route stake is easier, she is reunited with Rispoli, who rode her to a convincing G2 win two back. **FLIPPANT** ships in from the Midwest off an improved dead-heat stakes win at Indiana Grand. It was only her second start of the year; she enters late summer and fall as a fresh filly with room to improve. She was a two-time stakes winner last year at 3, her best races are still ahead. Midwest-based trainer Victoria Oliver is 3-for-10 lifetime in graded stakes on turf at Del Mar including two wins in this stake. **AVENUE DE FRANCE** wheels back three weeks after a solid win in a restricted stake on this course. She may have the edge over PARK AVENUE, who defeated her two back in Texas, due to the no-Lasix issue. PARK AVENUE is good when she fires, but recent no-Lasix starts are not good.

Seventh Race

1. Ultimate Gamble	2. Abeliefinthislivin	3. Truehood

Highly regarded 2yo **ULTIMATE GAMBLE**, purchased this spring for $1.75 million, makes his debut with a solid training pattern. He has not missed a beat since he began California workouts in May, he is fit for this six and a half-furlong distance. However, this maiden race is not a "must win." Although he is a sibling to champion sprinter Drefong, expectations for 'GAMBLE are he will improve at longer distances. Top choice anyway. **ABELIEFINTHISLIVIN** improved second out, runner-up in a fast race (81 Beyer). He narrowed the gap on the winner in that five and one-half furlong race, and may appreciate this longer distance. Stablemates **TRUEHOOD** and CAVE ROCK worked in company from the gate last weekend, and were inseparable on video. Both were timed in a bullet 59 seconds. ALEXANDER HELIOS ran okay finishing sixth in his debut three weeks ago. The sibling to Preakness winner Rombauer adds blinkers and also should like this longer distance.

Eighth Race

1. Dandy Warhol	2. Anmer Hall	3. Optimising

DANDY WARHOL, sixth with a bad trip in the Oceanside Stakes opening day, should be tough dropping to N1X and switching to Rispoli. 'WARHOL showed promise in his U.S. debut in the Oceanside. He broke last, trailed, checked at the three-eighths, re-rallied inside and finished sixth. With a clean trip, he could have given the winner a battle. **ANMER HALL** finished second in the Oceanside, pressing the pace while racing in the clear and holding off all but the winner. The lightly raced gelding has improved each start, he figures to be forwardly placed and will get first run. **OPTIMISING** returns from an extended layoff to the DMR course on which he ran well against top company all three tries last year as a 2yo. He runs well fresh, and returns with Lasix. SHOW TIME switches to turf following a two-turn maiden win on dirt in just his second start. He figures to prompt the pace.

Ninth Race

1. Procrastination	2. Absolutely Zero	3. Dazzlingdominika

Runaway debut winner **PROCRASTINATION** drew the rail in this G2 for 2yo fillies, but she is quick enough to make the lead. In her debut, she set a fast pace, shook off her rivals and won by eight lengths. Come catch her. **ABSOLUTELY ZERO** followed her debut victory with a hard-fought stakes win vs. males. She took heat inside, dueled, and held by a length. She is now two-for-two, with speed and a versatile style that should lead to a good trip in the clear just behind the speed. **DAZZLINGDOMINIKA** has worked very fast since transferring from Florida to the California stable of trainer Phil D'Amato. Her fast works include multiple works in company, she has improved since her maiden win three months ago. The top three are tough to separate. Maiden INFINITE DIAMOND ran better than looked in her debut. She was shuffled back early, lost position, rallied through traffic and finished okay. She will be rolling late.

Tenth Race

1. Pray for Me Ray	2. Spycatcher	3. Devil Moon

A better-than-looked runner-up finish by **PRAY FOR ME RAY** sets him up for a maiden win in his fourth start. His first two starts were sprint preps, he stretched out last time and broke poorly, trailed the field while the pace slowed, then smoked his final quarter-mile in :23.10 and finished second behind a pace-presser. Big effort by 'RAY, who is sitting on a maiden win. **SPYCATCHER** also stretched out

last time, and ran exceptionally well while over his conditions in an allowance race. He got rank early, and finished okay to miss by less than two lengths. He drops from N1X to MSW, and gets a rider switch to the meet's leading turf rider. **DEVIL MOON** is the one to catch. He pressed fast sprint fractions and cracked his first two starts. Now he goes long, and figures to make the lead. Come and catch him. EXPLAIN THIS AUDIT goes first off the claim, with a switch to hot new rider Berrios.