

**Date:** August 19th, 2022**Track:** Del Mar**By Brad Free****BEST BET: Fort Moultrie (3rd race)****First Race****1. That's Amare****2. Brandon'smylawyer****3. Xmas Surprise**

New first post time Friday, 3 p.m. **THAT'S AMARE** returns from a three-month layoff after an excusable misfire last out. She was away slowly from the rail, the race unfolded with no positional change at all. The 1-2-3-4-5-6 pacesetters finished in that order. 'AMARE never had a chance. Freshened since, with a history of firing first start back, she can make amends from just off the pace. She'll have to catch potential pacesetter **BRANDON'SMYLAWYER**. The latter was in over her head in a graded stake on dirt last time; she finished last. But she is 2-for-2 in turf sprints, her N1X win two back was highly rated, and she could make the lead. **XMAS SURPRISE** rallied from last to miss by only a half-length in a stake last out, but she might not get the same pace scenario here. **HAVANA LOVE** is usually in the hunt; her last win was fall 2020.

**Second Race****1. It's Saul Right****2. The Reign Song****3. Miss Kaline**

**IT'S SAUL RIGHT** gets another half-furlong after her rally missed by a head last out in a similar Cal-bred maiden-50 at five furlongs. Each start by 'RIGHT has been better than the start before, she can mow them down at five and one-half. **THE REIGN SONG** drops to maiden-claiming after she chased and tired against MSW Cal-bred company. The top choice finished in front of 'SONG when they met in May, but 'SONG has improved since. Also-eligible **MISS KALINE** could be an upset candidate following an inconclusive career debut. She was not quick, raced greenly while climbing, and finished only okay. She ran like a filly that will improve with racing. **GRAZED MY HEART** drops in for a tag, and faces state-bred company, after two okay efforts vs. MSW weight rivals on synthetic at Golden Gate.

**Third Race****1. Fort Moultrie****2. Cosmo****3. Dominant Soul**

First start in California, **FORT MOULTRIE** moves into the barn of trainer Phil D'Amato, while exiting a the barn of a 4-percent Kentucky trainer. The gelding has run well against better than he meets in this N3L starter allowance, and appears to simply be the "best horse" in the field. D'Amato and jockey Juan Hernandez are 8-for-13 with turf favorites the past three years. **COSMO** stretches out from sprints and returns to preferred footing, which is turf. Both turf races this year were strong (win, second), both were sprints. He won a turf route last year, and finished in the money in several turf routes. The point is, he can run long. **DOMINANT SOUL** will be forwardly placed chasing the speed likely to be set by stretch-out sprinter **COMMANDER KHALI**. If the pacesetter falters, **DOMINANT SOUL** would be among the first to attack.

**Fourth Race****1. Maxim Moment****2. Durante****3. Today Matters**

**MAXIM MOMENT** can win this N2L claiming route if his disappointing last start can be forgiven, and if he runs to his decisive maiden-claiming win two back. This field is not exactly loaded with speed, 'MOMENT should get a forwardly placed trip pressing modest fractions. **DURANTE** drops into the claiming ranks for the first time after battling allowance and stakes 3yos through his eight-race career. This is his first start against older; he is reunited with the rider who rode him to his best finishes. **TODAY MATTERS** wheels back in two weeks after a tough-trip eighth on turf. He prefers dirt. **BUTKUS** goes long for the first time and is likely to be forwardly placed.

**Fifth Race****1. True Patriot****2. Magic Game****3. Warren's Showgirl**

**TRUE PATRIOT** stretches to a mile on turf following two seconds in turf sprints; the Cal-bred maiden filly is bred to route. Sired by Clubhouse Ride, produced by a mare who won a maiden-claiming route and produced a Cal-bred route stakes winner, 'PATRIOT finished willingly both sprints, she may relish a mile. **MAGIC GAME** finished sixth in the race in which the top choice ran second, but there is more to it than finish position. 'GAME was blocked through the turn and most of the stretch, and did not have a fair shot. It was a better-than-looked effort by a filly who should handle a mile. **WARREN'S SHOWGIRL** has gradually improved as her career slowly unfolded.

Each race slightly better than the one before, she finished third last out behind two fillies who returned to run well (allowance winner, maiden runner-up). 'SHOWGIRL will be motoring late. FINNLEY'S KITTEN returns from a layoff with a new trainer and decent races last year as a 3yo. AVERY BLUE might be ranked too low. Her fourth-place finish here three weeks ago was okay.

### Sixth Race

---

#### 1. Horn of Plenty

#### 2. Luck's Royal Flush

#### 3. Bear Chum

---

Despite a next-to-last finish last out, **HORN OF PLENTY** gets the call based on sharp Midwest form and apparently strong works since raced. 'PLENTY did not have a published work over the Del Mar track prior to his first start here, but he posted two sharp works since being claimed by Mike Maker. Tab for a return to form, dropping from \$20k claiming to \$16k. **LUCK'S ROYAL FLUSH** gets an advantageous pace scenario for his up-front style. He appears to be the controlling speed, and he finished far in front of the top choice last out. The challenge for 'FLUSH is distance. He is 0-for-9 at this six-furlong distance or more; all five career wins were from five furlongs to five and a half. He will take them as far as he can. **BEAR CHUM** is a 12-win veteran in peak form, winner two back at Los Alamitos and runner-up last out in his first start at Del Mar. Optimistic class hike from \$12.5k to \$16k. **SQUARE DEAL** defeated **BEAR CHUM** last out and therefore must be considered.

### Seventh Race

---

#### 1. Neige Blanche

#### 2. Sister Otoole

#### 3. Bellamore

---

**NEIGE BLANCHE** has been the dominant female marathon specialist in California for the past year. She won this \$100k stake last summer and may be better this year. She is 5-for-5 in the U.S. at a mile and three-eighths or more, she has tactical speed if the pace is slow, and she can finish. Solid favorite. **SISTER OTOOLE** ships from the East Coast following a runner-up finish in a G3 marathon. Although she is still eligible to N2X, she is proven at this distance and will be rolling late. **BELLAMORE** is 4-for-4 since moving from dirt to synthetic and turf. She scored a game N2X win last out over this course at a mile and one-eighth, and gives every indication she will handle this mile and three-eighths trip. **SCARABEA** might be ranked too low by this handicapper; she finished second to **NEIGE BLANCHE** two starts back, but regressed last out in her first try over the DMR turf.

### Eighth Race

---

#### 1. Mongolian Kingdom

#### 2. Erebus

#### 3. Grazen in the Park

---

**MONGOLIAN KINGDOM**, a 13-start maiden, can win if he reproduces his runner-up finish on this track three weeks ago. A late-runner, he finished more than 11 lengths clear of third and earned a speed figure only a point less than par (65 Beyer) for this maiden-20 level. Fourteenth time the charm? **EREBUS** drops into a maiden-claiming race for the first time. His turf-route races early this year would be fast enough; he has run well over the DMR dirt surface. **GRAZEN IN THE PARK** stretches out for the first time, and drops to the bottom for the first time. **KING ROB** will be forwardly placed, setting or pressing slower fractions than the ones that led to his demise last out.