

Date: August 21st, 2022**Track:** Del Mar**By Brad Free****BEST BET: Home Cooking (7th race)****First Race****1. Backstreet Affair****2. Shemakescents****3. Big Jolt**

Also-eligible **BACKSTREET AFFAIR** drops from Cal-bred maiden special-weight to maiden-20, and returns to her preferred one-turn distance after fading in a turf route. Either of her third-place sprints in Northern California would be fast enough for this.

SHEMAKESCENTS ran better than the line looks last out, runner-up in a similar maiden-claiming sprint. She dueled, put away the speed, but got collared by a filly that rallied from last. Decent try, the one to beat if the top choice does not draw in. **BIG JOLT**, stablemate of the top choice, ran okay finishing third here opening weekend without having worked over the Del Mar track. Now she runs over the track on which she has been stabled all summer, with a decent race under her belt. Improvement likely. **GYPSY LANE** merits consideration dropping from MSW.

Second Race**1. Self Taught****2. All Eyes West****3. Clem Labine**

SELF TAUGHT returns to \$25k claiming following a creditable fourth in a N1X/optional \$40k claiming race at Los Alamitos that was a bit too tough. But his \$25k claiming starter win two back gives him a big look. The veteran late-runner ran well at DMR each of the past two summers, he can mow them down if he gets pace to run at. **ALL EYES WEST** returns from an extended layoff for a top stable that employs the no-claim waiver. That typically signals optimism, the gelding's Midwest form compares favorably to this California level. 'WEST should be forwardly placed in a sprint without a ton of speed. **CLEM LABINE** finished nowhere at 43-1 last out, and was claimed for \$40k. He meets easier, his N2X/optional claiming win two back ranks among the fastest recent races by any in the field. 'LABINE is a consummate pro: 11-for-35, with 9 seconds. **ITALIANO** might be ranked too low. Runner-up both recent starts, he should be forwardly placed. **PRIANO** is speed, up in class off a N3L win that was his third win from just five starts.

Third Race**1. For A Laugh****2. Russells Hustle****3. Valiancer**

In a turf-mile scramble for maiden 2-year-olds, the call is European import **FOR A LAUGH**, who faces maidens after finishing fourth of five in a Group 3 in England. His debut two back was a third-place finish in a productive maiden race. The winner returned to win a listed stake, the runner-up won his next two starts. **FOR A LAUGH**, proven on turf and with a pair of seven-furlong sprints under his belt, appears to be the most qualified to win this maiden turf mile. Also-eligible **RUSSELLS HUSTLE** finished an okay second in a low-rated turf mile here three weeks ago. If he draws in, he will be starting from the far outside. **VALIANCER** missed by a neck in his debut three months ago racing five furlongs on synthetic. His pedigree suggests a turf route is fine. The truth is, if the top choice does not win, anything goes.

Fourth Race**1. Disc Jockey****2. Proverb****3. Colonel Bowman**

DISC JOCKEY has never run two turns, but his closing rally in one-turn miles at Gulfstream Park suggests he can stay this two-turn mile while dropping from N1X to \$20k claiming. His figures match or exceed par for this level. **PROVERB** stumbled and lost all chance last out at a higher level. He drops to the lowest level of his career; his races in winter at Santa Anita would be fast enough. **COLONEL BOWMAN**, scratched from a \$16k claiming race July 22 opening day, shows up a month later for \$20k. Not sure about his ability to stay two turns; his three wins were one turn including one mile at Ellis Park. Other than distance, he fits on class and speed. **BIG BUZZ** took advantage of a blistering pace to score a last-to-first win one month ago. He will be rolling late.

Fifth Race**1. California Street****2. Octopus****3. Disco Ball**

CALIFORNIA STREET, who began his career five summers ago at DMR and has won twice over the track, can win this \$40k claiming sprint rallying from off the pace. Although he would prefer seven furlongs rather than this six and a half-furlong race, the consistent

gelding shows up most every start and enters as simply the best horse in the field. He must catch rivals whose up-front styles give them a tactical edge. **OCTOPUS** was claimed off a better-than-looked third last out. He broke last, lost ground while wide, and missed by only a length and a half. Up a level first start off the claim, he gets a rider switch to Florent Geroux, and should get a good trip pressing the pace from the outside post. **DISCO BALL** drops in for a tag following a N1X win. He is all speed, and a threat to wire the field as one of the favorites. **ALBIZU** has an upset look based on his highly rated win on this track last fall. This is his second start back from a layoff.

Sixth Race

1. Flashiest

2. King Cause

3. Rip City

One mile or less is the best route trip for **FLASHIEST**; his three wins were at distance of seven and a half furlongs, or one mile. Winner of the 2021 Oceanside Stakes the last time he ran a mile on turf at Del Mar, he shortens to his preferred distance after a solid runner-up finish at a mile and one eighth. He ran his final three furlongs in a quick :34.80. He can sit, wait and blast home for the win. **KING CAUSE** is a six-time winner dropping from a series of stakes to run for the optional \$80k claim tag. His third-place finish two starts back in a turf stake, and his win four starts back in a synthetic stake, would be good enough. **RIP CITY** ran well in his comeback following a one-year layoff, fourth by two lengths in a similar N2X/optional claiming turf route. He probably benefits shortening from a mile and one-eighth, to a mile. **ELECTOR** is speed, moving to turf for the first time with a shot to steal it.

Seventh Race

1. Home Cooking

2. Muteki

3. Curl Girl

HOME COOKING went too fast on the lead in her debut, and paid the price. She tired to finish third after dueling through the fastest opening quarter-mile of the meet for five and one-half furlongs. Blinkers off, two solid works since, post position nearer to the outside, she should be long gone. That is unless, her \$1 million Bob Baffert-trained stablemate **MUTEKI** mows her down. The latter debuts with solid workouts; she looked good in company from the gate early this month (worked viewed online). **CURL GIRL** also debuts with solid workouts including a pair of recent team drills with stablemate Classical Cat, a colt scheduled to debut in the fifth race Saturday.

Eighth Race

1. Eddie's New Dream

2. Warrens Candy Girl

3. Rose Dawson

EDDIE'S NEW DREAM has been facing tougher than she meets in this Cal-bred stake at a mile on turf. She could not quite stay nine furlongs last time in a N2X, and finished second. 'DREAM cuts back to a mile; her runner-up in a G3 turf mile three back would be enough. 'DREAM has an up-front running style that should play well in a field without much obvious speed. **WARRENS CANDY GIRL** wheels back one week after an impressive N1X win. She waited for room into the lane, burst through late, and won by a comfortable half-length. She only ran the final part of the race, therefore is more likely to reproduce the win while wheeling back on short notice. **ROSE DAWSON**, turf mile stakes winner early this year against state-bred 3yo fillies, stretches out for the first time since. Her two comeback sprints were actually okay. Runner-up behind stablemates Connie Swingle two back, and runner-up last out behind the impressive Fun to Dream. **ROSE DAWSON** is likely to be forwardly placed coming out of sprints.

Ninth Race

1. Your Ringer

2. Shvere Arbeter

3. Willamina

YOUR RINGER won a relatively fast maiden-20 last out that was validated when runner-up Baby Kristen returned to win her next start. 'RINGER is realistically placed at the \$16k claiming N2L level for her first against winners. **SHVERE ARBETER** drops to the bottom level (for winners) for the first time. She has speed, and probably benefits cutting back from a mile to five and a half. She fits, despite a very light work pattern since her most recent start early last month. **WILLAMINA** is in from the Midwest. She won a maiden-12.5k last out at Indiana Grand, the runner-up returned to win her next start. **LIL'S BIG SHOT** figures as a contender off her runaway maiden win in January. Her next three starts were not great, but they were against better than these.

Tenth Race

1. Gem Mine

2. Miss Mattie B

3. Rhea Moon

Wide-open N1X turf mile to end the week, **GEM MINE** is the tepid call based on her runner-up finish at this level two back and respectable sixth last out in the G2 San Clemente. This is another turf route with a murky pace scenario that benefits the top choice. **MISS MATTIE B** had a nightmare trip last out. She was rank and difficult to handle midpack, steadied on the backstretch, buried inside and behind runners, angled out too late, and coasted home. She is much better than her eighth-place finish suggests. The improving and trouble-prone **RHEA MOON** will be rolling late. Her closing third last out was possibly better than it looks because the race was won by the pacesetter.

