Date: September 4th, 2022   **Track:** Del Mar

By Brad Free

BEST BET: Rocky Gibraltar (6th race)

First Race

| 1. Carla | 2. Moonlit Mischief | 3. Huntingcoco |

CARLA, a 2yo debut filly with sharp works, is the one to beat. Sired by Medaglia d'Oro, trained by Bob Baffert, she appeared to "win" her final team work (viewed on XBTV.com). All systems go under leading rider Juan Hernandez. **MOONLIT MISCHIEF**, by Into Mischief, debuts with promising workouts for trainer Simon Callaghan. The second Baffert entrant is **HUNTINGCOCO**, sired by win-early stallion Practical Joke (19 percent wins debut juveniles). Three successive gate works is unusual. KANTHARA debuts for trainer John Shirreffs; expect her to rally late.

Second Race

| 1. Hail Freedom | 2. American Admiral | 3. Tio Magico |

HAIL FREEDOM can lead wire to wire for his third straight. He did it opening week setting a fast pace. No other horse this meet cracked 1:10 to win a dirt mile; 'FREEDOM went in 1:09.78 and kept running. Up in class from N1X to N2X, he is the one to catch. **AMERICAN ADMIRAL** finished second at this level last out, it turns out he got beat by a very good horse. That was Laurel River, who wheeled back to win a G2. 'ADMIRAL typically rallies from near the back, his style is opposite the top choice. **TIO MAGICO** is a Woodbine shipper into the California stable of trainer Phil D'Amato, who has had success with other Canada imports. 'MAGICO has speed, and may be positioned closest to the pacesetter top choice. AFFABLE finished third in the Laurel River race.

Third Race

| 1. Golf Drama | 2. Rhino | 3. Ship and Scam |

GOLF DRAMA finished second as the favorite in his May debut, then was sidelined. He returns with fast workouts over the Del Mar track. Come and catch him. **RHINO** took significant action first out, 8-5 favorite. He finished a lackluster third. But he ran like a horse that will improve with racing. He lost ground while wide, and went evenly. Umberto Rispoli back aboard, expect second-start improvement by the son of Texas Ryano. **SHIP AND SCAM** is back with Cal-bred maidens after trying to chase the fastest 2yo maiden winner of summer. That was 101-Beyer winner Cave Rock. 'SCAM has been a bit trouble-prone, but should be rolling late. MAXIMUS DECISION is a Stay Thirsty first-time starter produced by stakes-winner/stakes-producer My Fiona.

Fourth Race

| 1. Invincibella | 2. Dancing Crane | 3. Whistler's Style |

The runner-up finish by **INVINCIBELLA** last out in a similar claiming turf sprint makes her the one to beat. This field has speed to flatter her closing rally. **DANCING CRANE** is one of the aforementioned speeds. She cracked at odds-on last time, was claimed, and returns vs. similar. If one bad start is forgiven, any previous race gives her a license to lead gate to wire. She must deal with the speedster drawn directly to her outside, however. A late-running comebacker at a price is **WHISTLER'S STYLE**, route to sprint, first off the claim. She will be positioned far back early, and should fly late at a big price. BOWL OF CHERRIES seems to have tailed off, but she also goes first off the claim. That is reason for possible improvement.

Fifth Race

| 1. Desert Dawn | 2. Under the Stars | 3. Midnight Memories |

DESERT DAWN is the one to beat in this age-restricted G3 after a runner-up finish against older G1 fillies and mares. 'DAWN already stamped herself the top California 3yo filly winning the Santa Anita Oaks and finishing a close third in the Kentucky Oaks prior to her last-out second. The challenge here is pace. This field is not loaded with speed, and 'DAWN rallies from behind. **UNDER THE STARS** and **MIDNIGHT MEMORIES** have a tactical advantage over the top choice. 'STARS defeated the top choice in a G2, but DESERT DAWN stumbled badly at the break and lost all chance. 'STARS has a forwardly placed running style that should allow her a cozy trip either setting the pace or tucked second behind stretch-out stablemate MIDNIGHT MEMORIES. The latter has never run long, but she is bred to stay a

mile and quick enough to make the lead if she wants. GRACE ADLER won the G1 Debutante here last summer, but her best races have been around one turn.

Sixth Race

1. Rocky Gibraltar	2. Primer Dimer	3. Stayin' Out Late

Class dropper **ROCKY GIBRALTAR** figures to win this $16k claiming N2L route. First time at the bottom level, speed figures appropriate, and fast works on dirt that suggest he will appreciate the switch to the main track. Top stable is reliable with class-drop favorites. **PRIMER DIMER** was compromised by a wide trip last time, yet missed by only a half-length while losing ground much of the race. Claimed off the effort, back at the same level, logical contender. **STAYIN' OUT LATE** is in from the Midwest with many of the highest figs.

Seventh Race

1. Briefcase Girl	2. Helens Well	3. Pearl Glory

The visually impressive maiden win by second-time starter **BRIEFCASE GIRL** stamps her as an exciting prospect. She ran way with a burst of late speed to win a turf sprint by more than three lengths, and now stretches to a mile. Longer distance, tougher rivals, but the Hit It a Bomb filly looks up to the challenge. **HELENS WELL** was on the move in the G2 San Clemente when she got shut off in the stretch. Inconclusive. Multiple stakes placed, returning to N1X, she will roll late as one of the choices. **PEARL GLORY** is a multiple Group 3-placed filly from Europe making her U.S. debut in a local N1X. One could call her the "class" of the field. STERLING CREST is usually in the hunt with top fillies such as she faces here.

Eighth Race

1. Hopkins	2. Greenbow	3. One More Bid

HOPKINS earned an off-the-charts 104 Beyer in his debut, which is a stakes-caliber figure. He disappeared after that highly rated runner-up effort Dec. 26, this is his first start since. Fast works, fast horse, low odds. Four of the six runners from his debut race won their next start. **GREENBOW** is a 4yo first-time starter who has posted fast workout times including a bullet drill Aug. 28 in which he went better than graded winner Soothsay. Have to believe GREENBOW is live first out based on that team work. **ONE MORE BID** is a five-start maiden with runner-up finishes 3 of his last 4. He will be clunking along late for a piece.

Ninth Race

1. Dubai Key	2. Lieutenant Dan	3. Whatmakessammyrun

Current form vs. back class. Last-out allowance winner **DUBAI KEY** faces graded stakes-winning comebacker **LIEUTENANT DAN**. The call is DUBAI KEY, who ran super last out over this course. He took heat, shrugged off a pace rival and held. Now 3-for-3 in North America, bullet drill since raced, the sharp South American can fire right back. From the rail, he'll have to do it on the front end. LIEUTENANT DAN emerged last year as the top turf sprinter in California. This is his first start since his second in the Breeders' Cup Turf Sprint in fall. 'DAN is the fastest and most accomplished in the lineup, but his main objective is the BC Turf Sprint. It is likely 'DAN is using this as a comeback prep. Second preference nonetheless. **WHATMAKESSAMMYRUN** finished second behind the top choice last out, and one could argue 'SAMMY was best. He got caught wide on the turn and into the lane, yet finished well to miss by less than a length. Sharp return to California by the late-runner. He is a must-use.

Tenth Race

1. Fun to Dream	2. Anacapa	3. Awake At Midnyte

FUN TO DREAM blitzed a decent field of Cal-bred fillies in the Fleet Treat Stakes, winning by nearly 10 lengths after chasing a fast pace. Now two-for-two, she worked well since, and can fire right back in this open N1X. Last-out maiden winner **ANACAPA** is the main threat. She earned a respectable figure (81 Beyer) in her win; the two-three finishers returned to win next out. TAMING THE TIGRESS scored a sharp win at this N1X/optional claiming level last out, and could vie for favoritism. The filly she beat returned with a good allowance win. **AWAKE AT MIDNYTE** was well-regarded early this year, her campaign stalled after running in five consecutive graded stakes. Two of her best races were sprints; she might be best as a one-turn filly this time around.

Eleventh Race

1. My Kentucky Girl	2. Karakatsie	3. Get On the Bus

MY KENTUCKY GIRL bled and finished last as the favorite opening week. She was favored based on a turf pedigree and highly rated sprints her first two starts. The American Pharoah filly deserves another chance with a front-running or pace-pressing trip. Trainer Jonathan Wong has recently been hot (9-for-18 at DMR into Friday). **KARAKATSIE** had another tough Del Mar trip in her recent local start. Stakes-placed last year, still lightly raced this year (3 starts), license to improve. Trainer and jockey changes noted. **GET ON THE BUS** was prepping last weekend in a sprint. She only missed by 4.5 lengths. Two turns is her deal, she hit the board a couple times last year vs. similar. BUZZ OF NEW YORK, third at 5-2 in her comeback, might rally late. Her development seems to have stalled, however.