

Date: September 5th, 2022

Track: Del Mar

By Brad Free

BEST BET: Tom's Surprise (5th race)

First Race

1. Pat's Paddock Pick

2. Tall Boy

3. Written Dance

The runner-up debut by **PAT'S PADDOCK PICK** was better than looked, because he raced inside a day the outside lanes were best. He finished nearly two clear of third, posted solid works since, and is likely to improve second out moving up slightly in class. **TALL BOY** drops out of the fastest 2yo maiden special-weight race of summer; winner Cave Rock earned a 101 Beyer and could be favored next weekend in the G1 Del Mar Futurity. **TALL BOY** split the field in that MSW, now drops to maiden-80 and adds blinkers. The 68 Beyer he earned tops this field. **WRITTEN DANCE** makes his debut with a solid workout pattern; first-crop sire Tapwrit is 3-for-15 with debut progeny. **PRAYFOROURCOUNTRY** finished third with a tough trip (off slow from rail, lost ground rallying wide) against maiden-32s. Optimistic class hike, improvement likely.

Second Race

1. Kirstenbosch

2. Take a Leap

3. Ole Silver

Lightly raced **KIRSTENBOSCH** was only prepping last out in a turf route; she missed by four lengths making her first start in two months. Now she returns to dirt, the surface on which she has run her fastest races. With a comeback under her belt, and footing switch, she can win this N1X dirt route if she reproduces her dirt-sprint figures. Two turns not an issue; she won long on turf in spring. **TAKE A LEAP** is an 11-win veteran stretching out from a pair of decisive starter allowance sprint wins at Los Alamitos. She can run two turns, she ran well both previous starts at DMR (win, second). **OLE SILVER** stretches back out to the footing and distance (dirt route) of her best races in spring at Santa Anita. Those were front-running Cal-bred and N1X wins. She returns in a N1X while entered for the optional \$40k claim tag, and looms a threat on the front end. **KRISTI'S TIGER** will be running late.

Third Race

1. To Speight Her

2. Sai Con

3. Virat

Based on his promising fourth-place debut in a similar maiden turf sprint, second-time starter **TO SPEIGHT HER** gets the call. He chased a fast pacesetter first time, angled outside to briefly challenge, then tired. Solid effort. Trainer Andy Mathis is dynamite with second-start maidens. **SAI CON** is a nine-start maiden who benefits by the shorter five-furlong distance after tiring in a series of longer turf sprints at Santa Anita. First start in three months, speed to set or press the pace, he will be in the thick of it all the way around. **VIRAT** produced a strong late kick to finish second in front of the top choice in a promising comeback. **VIRAT** looks like the best late threat, while **APFEL** debuts with sharp works although turf-sprint maidens from this stable typically race into shape rather than fire first out.

Fourth Race

1. Li'l Grazen

2. Seven Sisters

3. Righteously

LI'L GRAZEN moves up a level to \$12.5k claiming off a romp by seven+ lengths. Claimed, two easy works since, logical choice, low odds. **SEVEN SISTERS** merits an upset chance, second start back and dropping from a comeback prep vs. better. She ran races in winter at Golden Gate Fields, and last summer at DMR, that are as fast as the top choice. Tab for an improved effort by 'SISTERS' second start following a layoff. **RIGHTEOUSLY** was cold in the betting and ran accordingly her most recent start, finishing last while 20 lengths behind the top choice. It was an uncharacteristic misfire by **RIGHTEOUSLY**, who was claimed by Jeff Mullins and figures as a contender if one bad race can be forgiven.

Fifth Race

1. Tom's Surprise

2. Big Buzz

3. Niles Channel

The outside post is a possible drawback for **TOM'S SURPRISE**, who otherwise stands out in this \$16k claiming starter turf mile. He faced tons better recently and scored three N2X wins this year in addition to a N1X. He is eligible to this starter condition because he ran for a \$16k tag back in January 2021. Notwithstanding post 9, 'SURPRISE' towers over this field on current class. **BIG BUZZ** ran well both recent dirt starts, \$16k claiming win and \$20k claiming third. Most of his races have been on turf, so the surface switch is not a major

issue, and he was claimed by a top first-off-the-claim trainer; Mullins is 8-for-34 f.o.c. past three years. **NILES CHANNEL** had a tough trip last out yet missed by only four lengths in a \$50k claim turf mile. Class drop helps. **NOLONGERAHOBBY** figures as a contender off his Cal-bred N1X turf win two back.

Sixth Race

1. Backstreet Affair**2. Don't Ju Forget****3. Miss Baylee**

BACKSTREET AFFAIR adds blinkers, returns to dirt, returns to a sprint and drops to Cal-bred maiden-50. Her third-place dirt-sprint two back at Pleasanton would probably be fast enough to handle these. Maidens-adding-blinkers is another high-percent Mathis move, 9-for-37 past five years. **DON'T JU FORGET** also adds blinkers while exiting the same turf route as the top choice. 'FORGET finished far in front of his rival last out, and he ran well his first three dirt sprints: two thirds and a fourth in no-tag maiden races. **MISS BAYLEE** finished in the money three of her last four starts as this level. Her third-place finish last out was flattered Friday when the winner Tiger Spice returned to win a starter allowance.

Seventh Race

1. Samurai Charm**2. Teddy's Barino****3. Velvet Slippers**

SAMURAI CHARM ran the two best races of her career at DMR around two turns last summer, and now stretches out and drops after placing in a pair of graded sprints at Santa Anita and Los Al. The front-runner/presser is drawn outside her main pace rival, and has the option of pushing the pace or setting it. Either way, the 5-for-9 stakes-winning mare is the one to beat. Her aforementioned pace rival is **TEDDY'S BARINO**, who moves up after three successive wins (two Cal-breds, N1X last out). She has speed to set or press, she is a 4-for-7 pro and will keep the top choice honest. **VELVET SLIPPERS** returns from a layoff of more than three months; she finished only a head behind the top choice when they met in a stake last fall at LRC. **LA CASTIGLIONE** won five straight in Arizona. Class test this time.

Eighth Race

1. Perfectible Lady**2. Beachgrass****3. Witch Moon**

PERFECTIBLE LADY smoked her final quarter in :23.23 to win a maiden-62.5k going away in her first start at Del Mar. That effort would probably be fast enough to handle this N2L starter allowance. **BEACHGRASS** returns from a four-month respite and switches riders to Umberto Rispoli. **BEACHGRASS** won a turf route at this level in March, she retains N2L eligibility because she was a maiden when she scored that win. **WITCH MOON** will be running late, as usual. **BLOSSOMING** stretches back out to her preferred two-turn trip. Her runner-up finish two back on dirt compares favorably to this field.

Ninth Race

1. Big Hopes**2. Chismosa****3. Uncontrollable**

BIG HOPES overcame a tough trip to win her debut more impressively than the margin (head) or Beyer (51). She broke slow from the rail, trailed, took dirt, weaved through traffic, angled out and got up. Excellent debut. She worked well since, and meets a modest field of Cal-bred 2yo stakes fillies. No reason she cannot make it back-to-back. She may have more speed than she showed first out. **CHISMOSA** followed her last-to-first maiden win with a come-from-behind stakes win. The filly she beat (Chedda Cash) was scheduled to start as a contender in a maiden sprint (race 3) on Saturday. **CHISMOSA** is the "class" of the field; she will be rolling late. **UNCONTROLLABLE** powered to a sharp come-from-behind victory in her debut; **ELECTRIC LETTUCE** is speed, likely to set the pace. She tired to fifth last out in a similar Cal-bred stake, but has now been stabled all summer at DMR and could shake loose. Theft at a price?

Tenth Race

1. Handy Dandy**2. Bally's Charm****3. Clutch Hitter**

Runner-up three straight allowance races, **HANDY DANDY** runs at the same N1X turf route level for 3yos. The horse that beat him last time (Dandy Warhol) entered the G2 Del Mar Derby on Sat. **BALLY'S CHARM** scored an impressive front-running stakes win over Cal-bred company last out, but that was back in May. He won a maiden race on the DMR turf last fall, and certainly is good enough. The question is fitness, his workout pattern was interrupted in July. He has four recorded works for his comeback. Second preference anyway. **CLUTCH HITTER** stretched out and dominated maidens last out by more than two lengths. Up the ladder with the lightly raced colt? **ANMER HALL** figures off his Oceanside Stakes runner-up two starts back.