

Date: August 7th, 2025

Track: Del Mar

By Brad Free

**BEST BET: *Tariff (4th race)***

**First Race**

1. Pride of Queens	2. Little Tinker Elle	3. Fire Ile
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**PRIDE OF QUEENS**, who finished last in her career debut opening weekend, gets the call dropping from maiden special-weight to maiden-32. Although she did not reach contention first out, these maiden-claiming 2yo fillies are significantly softer and her trainer does well with second-start maidens from MSW to MCL. The past five years, Doug O'Neill is 9-for-32 with the move (all ages). Kentucky shipper **LITTLE TINKER ELLE** showed improved speed second time out; she led to deep stretch and tired to fourth. 'ELLE posted a bullet work over the Del Mar track after shipping in; she is likely to produce speed while dropping slightly in class. Program favorite **FIRE ILE** figures as a contender off her grinding runner-up finish at Los Alamitos. She finished five lengths clear of third but earned a mere 39 Beyer. Low figure aside, 'ELI is a contender in this soft field.

**Second Race**

1. Shady Stripes	2. Midnight Cowgirl	3. Too Sassy
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The solid runner-up debut by **SHADY STRIPES** stamps her the one to beat, though she is going dirt to turf. 'STRIPES set the pace first out; she finished seven lengths clear of third. She adds blinkers and switches surface, but Smiling Tiger progeny are okay on grass. Come catch her. The filly who beat 'STRIPES first out (Liberation) subsequently finished fourth over the wire as odds-on favorite in a stakes race after being eliminated at the break. First-time starter **MIDNIGHT COWGIRL** debuts with a series of fast gate workouts. She apparently has speed. The uncertainty is surface. 'COWGIRL is not exactly bred for the surface, but she does have ability based on her works. **TOO SASSY** is likely to improve from her decent third-place debut. She dueled through a fast pace, hung tough to deep stretch, then tired. Sired by Om, the move to a turf sprint should also move her up. Progeny of Om have won 12 of 57 turf sprints (21 percent). First-time starter **VICTORIA'S JEWEL** has posted fast work times; her dam's two wins were on turf.

**Third Race**

1. Twilight Empire	2. One Arrow	3. Hollywood Mistress
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**TWILIGHT EMPIRE** stretches out from a decent third-place sprint opening weekend. She finished well, galloped out well, and may benefit by the extra distance of this \$8k claiming mile. She has routed 10 times: 3 wins and 3 seconds. **ONE ARROW** wheels back six days after a speed-and-fade comeback. She runs best around two turns, is quick enough to make the lead if she wants, and she won a maiden-claiming race last summer over the DMR surface. Come and catch her. **HOLLYWOOD MISTRESS** is a 10-win veteran claimed last out by trainer Jeff Mullins, whose first-off-the-claim runners always merit a closer look. 'MISTRESS is not particularly quick; she will rally late. The class hike from \$6,250 claiming to \$8k claiming is negligible. 'MISTRESS is a contender from off the pace. **IVORY MOON** stretches out for the first time and is likely to influence the pace scenario.

**Fourth Race**

1. Tariff	2. Curvino	3. Backdoor Royalty
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**TARIFF** can win this \$50k claiming turf mile for 3yos if he reproduces his starter allowance upset win two starts back against older at SA. Although he finished eighth last out, the N1X rivals in that race were stronger than this group. Off nearly two months, dropping in class, **TARIFF** looks best of a modest group. **CURVINO** figures to vie for favoritism while dropping from a series of allowance and/or stakes in the Midwest. Gelded since raced, he returns to California for a stable having a big summer meet. Peter Miller entered Thursday second in the standings, 8 for 47. Miller entered runners in six races Thursday. **BACKDOOR ROYALTY** was only prepping opening weekend, when he finished sixth in a starter allowance vs. older. That was his first start in more than three months, and the ideal prep for this age-restricted claiming race.

**Fifth Race**

1. Ya'll Come	2. Brunchandcrunch	3. Salient
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Although he drew the undesirable rail post in in this six-furlong sprint for Cal-bred maidens, **YA'LL COME** showed enough ability his first two starts to merit tepid favoritism. He finished a better-than-looked third in his wide-trip debut at Santa Anita, then ran basically the same race finishing third at LRC. Now he adds blinkers, he has three works over the DMR surface, and with a clean break can handle state-bred maidens. But fair warning: he is not a favorite that is particularly trustworthy. **BRUNCHANDCRUNCH** returns from an extended layoff with a series of fast workouts at San Luis Rey Downs. 'CRUNCH had all sorts of trouble both starts last summer; he returns as a first-time gelding and looms a contender if he runs as fast as he has works. **SALIENT** makes his career debut with a relatively short work tab (just four published works). But his connections fire occasionally with firsters. **CRIME LORD** appears to have trained well for his debut, although his stable wins more often with second-start maidens than debut maidens.

Sixth Race

1. Mr. Leasure
2. Baldoro
3. Dealers Special

In a wide-open N3L starter turf route, last-out N2L winner **MR. LEASURE** gets the call to post his second upset of the meet. It is true he benefitted from a perfect ground-saving trip to win by only a neck against easier last out, but the gelding seems to have learned to harness his speed and kick late. With a win over the local turf, and improving form, 'LEASURE can win right back, perhaps at generous odds again. **BALDORO** finished second his last three starts, including a neck defeat at this level last out. That race was flattered when third place Rastaman Vibe returned to win his next start. **BALDORO** has tactical speed to be forwardly placed in a race that could unfold at a soft pace. **DEALERS SPECIAL** returns to preferred footing (turf) after a misfire on dirt. His two turf starts this spring at SA at this level were not great, but he likes the DMR course: maiden win and allowance runner-up here last summer. **PROMISSIO** will be rolling late.

Seventh Race

1. Sharp Ride
2. Young Love
3. Lady Gregory

**SHARP RIDE** benefits by a return to dirt and four-month break between starts. She already won this condition; she entered for the optional \$20k claim tag. Her dirt wins two and three back stamp her the top contender. **YOUNG LOVE** and **DANCING WITH MAXINE** switch surfaces after winning back-to-back on turf. **YOUNG LOVE** is speed, while 'MAXINE will be running late. **YOUNG LOVE** won both comeback starts on turf, but trains well enough on dirt to give it a shot. Also, this field does not include much other speed. **LADY GREGORY** is not a confirmed starter. She is past due to win this Cal-bred N1X condition, having lost her last three starts at odds-on. In her main-track losses two and three back, she had significant traffic trouble. Although she prefers turf, she figures as a contender if she does start.

Eighth Race

1. Lady of Power
2. Hey Demps
3. Ms Brightside

**LADY OF POWER** missed by less than four lengths opening week vs. N1X rivals, now she drops to \$25k claiming N2L for her second start on the comeback trail. 'POWER enters as simply the best horse in the field. **HEY DEMPS** was claimed from a fourth-place comeback in which she was keen and unrelaxed. Blinkers off, she has natural speed to be forwardly placed, and fits perfect based on her Cal-bred allowance form a year ago. **MS BRIGHTSIDE** drops to the lowest level of her career off a short break; she will be rolling late.