

Date: August 14th, 2025

Track: Del Mar

By Brad Free

BEST BET: Dixie's Delight (4th race)

First Race

1. Gandalf
2. Reno
3. Septembersixtyfour

First-time starter **GANDALF** debuts with a series of fast workouts, against a field of older maidens that does not include any standouts. Although the Aug. 7 work by **GANDALF** was not as impressive as previous works, that is because he got hit in the eye with a dirt clod and was uncomfortable. That will not happen in this turf sprint. Also, trainer John Sadler won with six of his last 14 first-time starters (both surfaces, all class levels). **RENO** improved a ton when he switched to turf. He set the pace, fought back when collared by the odds-on winner, and held second. Solid try by the 5yo maiden who started only twice. His up-front style matches the speed-friendly course profile. From 25 turf sprints, 12 were won by the pacesetter; 20 by runners positioned 1-2-3. **SEPTEMBERSIXTYFOUR** ran much better than the line looks in his fifth-place debut. He broke slow, hit traffic and got stalled on the turn, hit more traffic into the stretch, then finished with run and galloped out big after the wire. He worked well since, and should make a forward move with a clean takeoff. If this race was longer than just five furlongs, the second-time starter might be the top choice. **DOC BOVIE** debuts with fast works.

Second Race

1. Auratium
2. Exington
3. Maniae

AURATIUM found her friends last out, when she dropped to the low N2L claiming level and finished second with a somewhat eventful trip (rank, wide). She is reunited with Del Mar meet-leading rider Juan Hernandez, and has tactical speed to create her own trip. **EXINGTON** plummets in class after a speed-and-fade local debut vs. tougher company in a turf route. Her Midwest form this year at Ellis Park and Turfway Park puts her squarely in the hunt. **MANIAE** looms the upset candidate, first off the claim and first-time long on dirt. She is quick enough to make the lead if she wants.

Third Race

1. Tight Squeeze
2. Sophistry
3. Polythene Pam

Late-runner **TIGHT SQUEEZE** faces a challenging course profile in this \$50k claiming turf sprint. Speed has dominated turf sprints this summer, and 'SQUEEZE runs from behind. But she is meeting easier than the N1X/\$80k claiming fillies she finished third against last out. Although five furlongs is shorter than she prefers, she gets the tepid call. **SOPHISTRY** is speed, and a candidate to steal it. She won a maiden turf sprint here last summer, and trounced a 1,000-yard nighttime race last month at Los Alamitos. **SOPHISTRY** benefits by the speed-friendly course profile outlined in the race-1 commentary. Come and catch her. **POLYTHENE PAM**, off two and one-half months, runs well fresh and her stable is having a big summer. **SPECIAL LOOK** has enough speed to pester **SOPHISTRY**.

Fourth Race

1. Dixie's Delight
2. Oscar Night
3. Rockford Peach

Runner-up last out in a similar maiden-12.5k starter allowance, **DIXIE'S DELIGHT** looks tough shortening from six furlongs to five and a half. She set the pace to deep stretch last out, finished more than three lengths clear of third and defeated six of these rivals. Second spin over the track, 'DELIGHT can deliver at a short price. **OSCAR NIGHT** showed modest ability hitting the board twice from three starts. She was unable to stay a mile last out, but she sharpened her speed since with a series of short works. **ROCKFORD PEACH** misfired without an alibi last out; she pressed the pace and was empty in the stretch. She ran ninth. But her okay fourth-place finish two starts back puts her in the hunt.

Fifth Race

1. Case Hit
2. Potito
3. Travelin' Show

CASE HIT probably will not get the same easy lead he benefitted from when he finished second in his comeback, yet that effort makes him the one to beat in this Cal-bred N1X. 'HIT led to deep stretch then got collared by favorite Sir Rocket, who returned Sunday to win again. It was a solid comeback for 'HIT, who was making his first start in nearly a year. He takes off blinkers, and could get a great trip positioned right behind the pace likely to be set by the front-runners in post 2-3. **POTITO** ran well in his comeback, runner-up in the

Sixth Race

1. Bag's Gold	2. Howbeit	3. Blue Cheese Olive
Runner-up for \$10k claiming in his comeback, BAG'S GOLD drops to \$6,250 claiming and returns to the DMR track on which he has won two of five starts. The fastest in the field based on his figures last year, 'GOLD wins if he runs as well as his comeback at LRC. HOWBEIT should vie for favoritism after scoring his 14th victory last out at this class level at LRC. Claimed off the win, the 8yo gelding returns at the same level as an obvious contender. BLUE CHEESE OLIVE showed surprising speed last out; he set the pace and tired to fourth. Good try by a low-level claiming gelding who is rounding back into form. HALO UNCLE upset easier last out; his three starts over the DMR track produced two wins and a second.		

Seventh Race

1. Defiance	2. Roselee May	3. Eternal Reign
The gradually improving turf filly DEFIANCE , fast-closing third last out at one mile, should relish a mile and three-eighths. Sired by Curlin and produced by two-time G1 turf-route winner Avenue, DEFIANCE ran the race of her career last out. She ran faster each successive quarter-mile including a :23.14 come-home in which she passed most of the field. She stretches to three turns and can handle this entry-level allowance. ROSELEE MAY misfired as the favorite last out in the same race the top choice exits. 'MAY was caught wide from post 10, chased the pace, and surrendered. She is better than the race suggests, having finished a close third two back and winning a starter allowance three back. 'MAY should appreciate the slower pace of this marathon. Win or lose, she figures for a front-running/pressing trip. ETERNAL REIGN may have moved too soon last out at a mile. She rallied to the lead at the furlong pole, then lost her punch and finished third. Not sure about distance for her; this is her first try beyond a mile. But on current form, she fits. THEBESTISYETTOBE defeated easier company in back-to-back races at Santa Anita; she might be good enough to handle the class hike from starter allowance to N1X.		

Eighth Race

1. Friends With Fidel	2. Toppers At Seaside	3. Tapit Dynasty
FRIENDS WITH FIDEL drops to maiden-20 for the first time and tries two turns for the first time. He ran well last out at a higher level, runner-up in a sprint. 'FIDEL meets a rather ordinary field here; it is the perfect spot for a class-drop stretch-out victory. 'FIDEL is trained by Bob Hess Jr., who also entered 10-start maiden TOPPERS AT SEASIDE . The latter lost his punch late after dueling for the lead from inside posts both recent. Now he is stuck outside (post 10 of 11), but he can apply pressure rather than be on the receiving end. TAPIT DYNASTY finished third as the favorite last out, but the effort was better than it looks. He dueled, put away the speed, but got collared by one-two finishers who rallied from last and next-to-last. The point is, 'DYNASTY had the race shape against him. He has changed trainers since raced, and might be more effective rallying from behind rather than contesting the pace.		