

Date: August 16th, 2025

Track: Del Mar

By Brad Free

BEST BET: Mystic Moses (7th race)

First Race

1. Roman Empress	2. Putt for Dough	3. Unwritten Code
<p>ROMAN EMPRESS drops to \$8k claiming after an okay third for \$10k in her return to Del Mar. She produced speed going five and a half, and figures to be forwardly placed at this six-furlong trip. The veteran claiming mare likes this track, first and third last summer, runner-up at 44-1 here two summers ago. PUTT FOR DOUGH was re-claimed last out by Antonio Garcia, who trained her to a third-place finish at this level two back, and a pair of restricted claiming wins in spring at Santa Anita. Not sure what type trip she can work out from the rail, however. She is not that quick. Second preference anyway. UNWRITTEN CODE has a sketchy pattern. She dropped from \$32k to \$10k last out, and finished last. Maybe she can wake up for her new connections who claimed her, and she does have speed and a speed rider. She'll be involved partway at least.</p>		

Second Race

1. Bad Uncle Barry	2. Regal Patriot	3. Anmer Hall
<p>Runner-up in a similar N1X turf sprint, BAD UNCLE BARRY gets the call. One-two each of four turf sprints, 'BARRY ran a winning race last out while finishing nearly two lengths clear of third. The knock is he had every chance to get past the leader in the stretch, but hung. This is his third start back from a layoff, he can win from off the pace in a race that should unfold at a legitimate pace. REGAL PATRIOT moves up to open company after he wired a Cal-bred allowance in his first try over the DMR turf. An 8-for-16 pro, 'PATRIOT has speed for an up-front trip. That could give him the advantage over the top choice, because speed has been powerful this summer in turf sprints (through last weekend). ANMER HALL did not have the greatest of trips in his comeback (squeezed), but he finished with run to split the field while making his first start since last summer. He will be rolling late and he can be closer to the front than he was last out. OUR BUCKY CHARM, runner-up his last two starts in turf sprints at SA, could tuck into a cozy trip saving ground right behind the speed.</p>		

Third Race

1. Sendit Mo	2. Chapter One	3. Falcon Jet
<p>The 2yo colt SENDIT MO can make amends after misfiring as the favorite in his debut two weeks ago on turf. He trained very well on dirt going in, but did not like the turf according to his rider and he displaced (breathing issue) according to his trainer. 'MO came back with an easy half-mile dirt work since, and now switches to dirt. Tab for major improvement by the Peter Miller trainee. CHAPTER ONE, by precocious first-crop sire Yaupon (21 percent debut wins), has a sharp series of works for his debut for trainer Michael McCarthy. The colt's multiple stakes-winning dam has produced two stakes winners, both won first out. 'MO has worked as if he is ready to fire. Bob Baffert trainees FALCON JET and LITMUS TEST command attention. FALCON JET ran well finishing second in his debut two weeks ago, a race won by odds-on stablemate Buetane. Improvement likely second start for 'JET, though he drew the rail again. LITMUS TEST has posted fast work times for his debut; he will need to be quick to win at this five and one-half furlong distance.</p>		

Fourth Race

1. Padel Addict	2. Got the Ring	3. Dats Ms. Blame
<p>European import PADEL ADDICT and California local GOT THE RING are tough to separate in this turf mile for maiden 2yo fillies. PADEL ADDICT exits a highly productive maiden race in Ireland. She finished fourth; the 1-2-3 finishers are very good. The winner won a G2 next out; the runner-up won a pair of G2s and finished second in a G1; the third-place finisher won a maiden race two starts later and then won a listed stakes. 'ADDICT posted a series of easy works for trainer Phil D'Amato since arriving in the U.S., expectations are she will fire first out. GOT THE RING probably should have won last time. Stretching to a mile after a creditable sprint debut, she broke last, raced far back, finished well and missed by less than a length. With a clean takeoff this time, she will be right there again. DATS MS. BLAME stretches out from a seventh-place sprint debut for a stable that does well with maiden stretch-outs. KIZAZI finished third both starts, a sprint and a route. She fits.</p>		

Fifth Race

1. Lil' Boom Boom	2. Misty Muppet	3. Eltonsingsanother
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LIL' BOOM BOOM looks best of a soft lot in this \$25k claiming sprint, N2L. Maiden-50 winner two back, runner-up last out at this level at Los Alamitos in a race with four starters, 'BOOM ran well over the DMR track last summer (runner-up twice) and is comfortably drawn outside where she can press or stalk. **MISTY MUPPET**, in the money eight of her last nine without a win during that time, finished a head behind the top choice last out at LRC and is returning to the DMR track on which she scored her only career win.

ELTONSINGSANOTHER drops in class following a speed-and-fade comeback vs. tougher company. With a prep under her belt, meeting modest rivals, she could take the lead and be long gone second start back. **WILD CAT DANZING** goes route to sprint and will be rolling late while also dropping in class.

Sixth Race

1. Gypsy Woman

2. Rugelach

3. The White Lady

Comeback mare **GYPSY WOMAN** returns from a layoff with sharp works, proven form on DMR turf, and a winner at this N1X level here last summer. Off since October, she runs well fresh and is entered for the optional \$50k claim tag. First start back for a stable reliable with comebacks, 'WOMAN has speed to tuck into a cozy trip right behind likely pacesetter **RUGELACH**. The latter is a DMR horse-for-course dropping from a N2X that was her first start since last summer. **RUGELACH** sped to the lead, set the pace to the furlong pole, then weakened. Wheeled back in two weeks, down a level and also entered for the optional claim tag, **RUGELACH** has one option from the outside post. That is, use her speed and try to steal it. She is 4-for-5 on DMR turf and could be long gone second start back. **THE WHITE LADY** finished second both U.S. starts this spring at Santa Anita. She might want farther than a mile and a sixteenth, but she will be finishing. **LAUDATORY** missed by a neck in her comeback two months ago, though the winner of that race disappointed as the favorite next out in a N2X.

Seventh Race

1. Mystic Moses

2. Can't Help Myself

3. Ocean Bear

The runner-up finish by **MYSTIC MOSES** here last month was validated when winner Sammy Davis wheeled back to win the Graduation Stakes. 'MOSES dueled on a fast pace before finishing second, he looks like the speed of the field stretching from five and one-half furlongs to six. He can wire the field. **CAN'T HELP MYSELF**, also a last-out runner-up, will press the pace from the outside. He improved a ton in his second start; the colt who beat him (Thirsty Rebel) is very good. First-time starters **OCEAN BEAR** and **RIDE THE TIGER** appear to have worked well. **OCEAN BEAR** is by Bolt d'Oro, whose 2yo debut progeny have won at an above-average 16 percent clip; 'TIGER is by Smiling Tiger (11 percent wins debut 2yos, which is about average).

Eighth Race

1. Thought Process

2. Will Then

3. Lush Lips

THOUGHT PROCESS emerged as California's top 3yo grass filly by scoring a decisive G2 win last out at one mile; the 5-for-7 filly has won three stakes and is deserving chalk in this mile and one-eighth G1 despite post 10. She has speed to avoid being excessively wide, she does not require the lead, she can finish, and she trained well since raced including a solid three-way team work last weekend (viewed online). Favorites won this stakes four of the last six years including 2022 when Spendarella crushed after breaking from post 10, same post as 'PROCESS. The main threat to the favorite is **WILL THEN**, who finished two and one-half lengths behind the top choice last out. That mile race was the first start in two and one-half months for 'THEN, who was using the comeback as a prep for this longer race. G3 winner on DMR turf last fall, 'THEN figures to make a forward move second start back, and she benefits by the mile and one-eighth distance. **LUSH LIPS** arrived early this week from Kentucky, where she scored a confidence-building stakes win following a pair of runner-up finishes in graded stakes won by star filly Nitrogen. 'LIPS improved each successive U.S. start, her versatility allows her to create her own trip. One knock: the filly 'LIPS defeated last out got crushed in her next start. Lightly raced **SLICK** looms the upsetter. She finished well for third in her comeback, and came out of the race better than she went in. She should start at a hint of a price. **CASALU** might be ranked too low. The two-time stakes winner finished second to **THOUGHT PROCESS** last out while in front of **WILL THEN**. The challenge for **CASALU** is distance. Not sure if she wants nine furlongs. **TAKE A BREATH** arrived two weeks ago from England, where she won her last two starts against easier than these.

Ninth Race

1. Contrary Chieftain

2. Joint Venture

3. Get Her Number

CONTRARY CHIEFTAIN had no shot last out when he broke from post 10 in a turf mile and was wide throughout before he chucked it and finished last. Now he returns to dirt, drops to \$12.5k claiming (he won two back for \$16k), and has speed to set or press the pace.

JOINT VENTURE misfired in the first race of the meet, but was claimed off the seventh-place finish and drops to \$12.5k. His runner-up finishes for \$16k and \$25k this spring at Santa Anita put him in the hunt. **GET HER NUMBER**, G1 winner as a 2yo in 2020 (American Pharoah Stakes at SA), drops to the lowest level of his career while stretching out from sprints. The 7yo has lost a step at this stage, but fits

Tenth Race

1. Toes	2. Auntie	3. The Mizen Queen
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A creditable sixth-place comeback by **TOES** makes her the tepid choice in this maiden turf route. TOES ran like she needed the start. She saved ground, angled out for the stretch, then flattened out. Not bad for her first start since last summer. TOES worked three times since, and should improve second start back. This race is problematic due to a murky pace scenario. There is no confirmed speed; TOES is likely to be close to the front. **AUNTIE** got rank and misfired last out. She may be more effective if her new rider lets her roll. That is what AUNTIE did two back when she led to deep stretch and tired to second. From the outside post, AUNTIE must use her speed. That might be a winning strategy, because pacesetting chores are up for grabs. **THE MIZEN QUEEN** is a new shooter from Ireland; she finished second in a 15-runner field her only start this year and according to foreign past-performance commentary has enough speed to be forwardly placed. The uncertainty is a gap in her works between July 12 and Aug. 4. Third preference nonetheless. GATHERED is a lightly raced comebacker making her first start this year and first in California while landing the meet-leading jockey. GATHERED did show some ability last year.