

Date: August 21st, 2025

Track: Del Mar

By Brad Free

BEST BET: Trusty Rusty (8th race)

First Race

| | | |
|-------------------|---------|------------------|
| 1. Margarita Girl | 2. Neko | 3. Into the Hall |
|-------------------|---------|------------------|

Beaten favorite all five starts, in the money all five starts, career maiden **MARGARITA GIRL** is the reluctant choice in this maiden sprint. She looks like the speed of the field, she probably benefits shortening up a half-furlong after setting a fast pace and tiring at six and one-half. Come and catch her. First-time starter **NEKO** debuts with a solid recent work pattern including a team work Aug. 7 with Litmus Test, a 2yo who scored a sharp debut win last weekend. **NEKO** was second-best in the work, but her younger rival is very good. Outside post a potential benefit for **NEKO**. **INTO THE HALL** figures as a contender based on her only dirt start, a third-place finish this spring at Santa Anita in a fast race. Two other starts by 'HALL were on turf, and not that great. She is as contender on dirt. **CURTSY** finished an okay fourth in her debut last month, and is likely to improve second time out.

Second Race

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------|------------------|
| 1. Video Review | 2. B Grayson | 3. Smiling Tizzy |
|-----------------|--------------|------------------|

Claimed last out from a runner-up finish in a similar maiden-50 turf sprint, **VIDEO REVIEW** returns from a two-month break at the same level but facing a weaker field. He has enough natural speed to be forwardly placed over a turf-sprint course kind to front-runners and pace-pressers; trainer John Sadler won with 4 of his last 8 first-off-the-claim maidens. **B GRAYSON** drops from MSW to MCL for his second start following a long layoff. He ran okay in his comeback vs. better rivals, and his form last season as a 2yo was not bad. Improvement likely second start back, first-time claim tag. **SMILING TIZZY** had a tough trip finishing third last out on dirt; he also runs well on turf. 'TIZZY will rally late.

Third Race

| | | |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 1. Thirsty Trickster | 2. Exington | 3. Princess Daddy |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------------|

Runner-up despite a bad start at this claiming level for 3yo fillies, **THIRSTY TRICKSTER** finished second while closing from the back of the back and missing by only a length behind a front-running winner. Good try by 'TRICKSTER, who runs best from a forward position. If she breaks better this time, she can win with a pressing trip. **EXINGTON** was claimed from a runner-up finish one week ago in a N2L claiming mile against older fillies and mares. She finished nearly four lengths clear of third, and cuts back to one turn while dead fit wheeling back on short notice. She will rally. **PRINCESS DADDY** also goes route to sprint, and drops into an age-restricted claiming race after facing older in recent starts. **CIOPPINA PASADINA** is speed in a field without that much speed. Price play on the front end?

Fourth Race

| | | |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Cara Rose | 2. Avocado Lake | 3. Violets Song |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|

In the money all three starts, **CARA ROSE** is the one to beat in this turf sprint for maiden 2yo fillies bred in California. 'ROSE ran well her only turf start two back, finishing third vs. open company. Her runner-up finish last out on dirt was decent, also. She has an up-front style that matches the speed-friendly course profile. First-time starter **AVOCADO LAKE** has improved in her recent works, and based on a solid gate work six days ago she looks ready to roll. Progeny of Om win at 16 percent rate first time out (all ages); the dam of 'LAKE has produced a debut winner from four runners. Also-eligible **VIOLETS SONG** is a Cal-bred with a Kentucky pedigree (by Violence, produced by an Into Mischief mare). Good works, although maidens from this stable typically race into condition rather than fire first out. First-time starter **MAGIC CLUB**, sibling to multiple graded winner Closing Remarks, has not shown much speed in morning works. This sprint could be a prep for longer. But 'CLUB should be running late.

Fifth Race

| | | |
|----------------|---------------|---------------------|
| 1. Miso Phansy | 2. Issa Court | 3. Lady Mendelssohn |
|----------------|---------------|---------------------|

Stakes-placed **MISO PHANSY** fits perfect in this Cal-bred allowance dirt route. The question is surface. All seven starts by 'PHANSY were on turf including a runner-up finish in a G3 and a state-bred stakes. This is the first start against older for 'PHANSY, who reportedly has worked well on dirt and will rally from behind. Her seventh-place finish last out in the G2 San Clemente was actually not bad. A pace

duel foiled **ISSA COURT** last out in a similar Cal-bred N1X dirt route, but there is less speed in this field. First off the claim by J. Kent Sweezey, 'COURT' is a five-time winner who has won at this level; she is entered for the optional \$20k claim tag. The race she lost as the favorite last out was dominated by deep closers; all the speed collapsed. In this slower-tempo race, 'COURT' should set or press easier splits while adding blinkers. **LADY MENDELSSOHN** stretches out from an okay third in a Cal-bred sprint stakes; she is likely to be forwardly placed. Her best races have been routes. **JESSEBEAR** returns from a 10-month layoff for a trainer whose comebackers can fire.

Sixth Race

| | | |
|----------|------------|-----------------|
| 1. Freya | 2. Mirinda | 3. Magical Miss |
|----------|------------|-----------------|

Comeback filly **FREYA** can defeat front-runner **MIRINDA** in this Cal-bred allowance turf sprint. **FREYA** has not raced since November, when she defeated subsequent stakes-placed Miso Phansy in a turf sprint over the DMR course. Unraced since her maiden win, **FREYA** appears to have trained well for her return. She won't get the same easy lead she benefitted from in her maiden win, but she should be a better filly at age 3 and has enough natural speed to keep the pacesetter in her sights. **MIRINDA** is a one-dimensional speedster who lost her chance last out when she did not break well, steadied, and lost position. That was the end of that; she finished next to last. The front-runner switches to meet-leading rider Juan Hernandez, and looks quickest of the quick. Also-eligible **MAGICAL MISS** wheels back 18 days after a solid maiden win over this course. She breezed three-eighths less than two weeks after her win, and has plenty of upside. She figures for a pressing trip on the outside.

Seventh Race

| | | |
|--------------------|------------|----------|
| 1. Impossible Task | 2. Sea Dog | 3. Havoc |
|--------------------|------------|----------|

IMPOSSIBLE TASK figures for a front-running/pace-pressing trip in this \$6,250 claiming starter. The 8yo gelding was claimed from a respectable runner-up finish early last month at Los Alamitos; new trainer Leonard Powell does well first off the claim: 4 wins and 5 seconds from his last 18 f.o.c. starters. **SEA DOG** has not raced since March, but he runs well fresh and his last three starts were faster than any recent start by the top choice. **HAVOC** stretches out after splitting the field in a low-level claiming sprint. Two turns is uncertain territory for the gelding, but he does figure to influence the pace.

Eighth Race

| | | |
|-----------------|------------|--------------------|
| 1. Trusty Rusty | 2. Druidic | 3. Mongolian Apple |
|-----------------|------------|--------------------|

TRUSTY RUSTY stands out in this \$16k claiming starter, based on his runner-up finish last out for \$32k over the DMR turf. It's true he often falls short of the mark (nine in-the-money finishes since his most recent win last September), but on current form he is simply the fastest and best horse in the field. **DRUIDIC** upset five of these last out at the same starter allowance level. He has speed to create his own trip; he is likely to tuck in just off the pace. **MONGOLIAN APPLE** ran like a short horse last out. He pressed the pace and tired to seventh while making his first start in four months. With a race under his belt, decent form early this year at Tampa Bay Downs, 'APPLE should improve second start back.