

Date: August 23rd, 2025

Track: Del Mar

By Brad Free

BEST BET: Yellow Card (8th race)

First Race

1. Provenance	2. Plutarch	3. Intrepido
Another Del Mar 2yo maiden race led by Bob Baffert trainees. At a mile on dirt, this is the first 2yo dirt route of summer. Baffert entered PROVENANCE , an Into Mischief colt who is the first runner from two-time champion Monomoy Girl. Baffert also entered PLUTARCH , an Into Mischief colt produced by six-time G1 winner Stellar Wind. PROVENANCE and PLUTARCH worked in company Aug. 16; they earned the same time but PROVENANCE looked slightly best (work viewed online). Close call. Both colts appear ready to fire. Baffert entered the racing week having won nine consecutive dirt races. INTREPIDO stretches out from a decent fourth-place debut in the fastest 2yo race of the season (winner Brant earned 101 Beyer). INTREPIDO broke slowly, finished well and galloped out with run. Solid debut by INTREPIDO , who is bred to route. CHARLIE'S CURLIN also goes long off a respectable third-place debut. Maidens from this stable often improve second time out; the son of Curlin should relish two turns.		

Second Race

1. Let Seamus Go	2. Spearfish	3. Mischiefs Causeway
LET SEAMUS GO drops from starter allowance to \$25k claiming N2L for his second start after a short summer break. He has never raced this low; his up-front style should play well in a field without much pace. SPEARFISH finished second at this class level last out and will be rolling late. MISCHIEFS CAUSEWAY drops into the claiming ranks after a sixth-place comeback that was his first start in more than a year. His races in 2024 put him squarely in the hunt, and the chances are he will improve second start back while dropping in class. ONE MOR STORY has speed on dirt; this is his first start on turf. He is not really bred for the surface, but could influence the pace.		

Third Race

1. Ready to Pounce	2. Contrary Chieftain	3. Father Delay
READY TO POUNCE won the first race of the summer meet, he was claimed for \$16k and moves up to \$20k while seeking a repeat. Although his opening day win was visually modest, the race has produced at least two next-out winners, and POUNCE figures for the same pressing trip on Saturday that he got last out. His main rival is wheeling back in one week. CONTRARY CHIEFTAIN missed by less than a length for a \$12.5k tag last Saturday, finishing more than three lengths clear of third. This is already the third start of the meet for CHIEFTAIN , but he is doing well and will be involved in the pace. FATHER DELAY chased, cracked and finished a distant third last out against much tougher. Down from \$35k claiming to the \$20k level of his win two back, DELAY is an in-form veteran with a versatile style that adapts to any pace scenario. GREAT KING returns from Emerald Downs in top form; he has run well in Southern California.		

Fourth Race

1. Diamond Bar Gal	2. Itzel	3. Shangrilama
Freshened three months and returning to the DMR turf on which he ran well all five tries (two wins, one third), DIAMOND BAR GAL should fire first start back. There is pace to flatter her closing rally, she has run well fresh, and after a N3L win last out she fits perfect against open \$25k claiming company. ITZEL drops out of an allowance race in which she dueled on the lead until deep stretch and finished fourth. Decent effort, albeit with the course profile in her favor. DMR turf sprints favored speed early in the meet, but that speed-friendly profile has tempered. Nevertheless, ITZEL is facing easier and will be a factor up front. SHANGRILAMA makes her first start since June 2024. She won her U.S. debut off a layoff of more than a year, and her comeback works are fast. VELOCIOUS adds speed; TAM'S LITTLE ANGEL will rally late in a race likely to unfold at a fast pace.		

Fifth Race

1. Tee N Off	2. Crossrighthands	3. Make It a Large
This Cal-bred maiden-50 is a mess. It is a good spot to take a shot at a price. TEE N OFF ran okay last out at this level, closing to fourth at five and one-half furlongs. He gets another half-furlong, switches riders to Edwin Maldonado, and there really is not much here to beat. Tab for a minor upset in his fourth start. CROSSRIGHTHANDS finished next-to-last in his debut after getting some betting action at 10-1		

in a big field. Maidens from this stable often improve second out. **MAKE IT A LARGE** was compromised by a weird trip in his comeback. He was ridden hard early, then wrangled back, got rank, and surrendered. He is quick enough to contest the pace with a new rider, and likely to improve second start back. **CITIZEN BARRETT** returns from a seven-month layoff for a trainer whose comebackers often fire.

Sixth Race

1. Bonneville Jim	2. Big Bill	3. Brahms Mendelssohn
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This turf mile for Cal-bred maidens is a good spot to take a shot at a price. **BONNEVILLE JIM** can upset likely favorite **BIG BILL**. Although he finished more than four lengths behind his rival last time in a similar state-bred maiden turf route, that race looked like an educational run for a gelding stretching out from sprints. 'JIM was anchored early, trailed the field, then finished willingly in a race dominated by the pacesetter. Under the circumstances, 'JIM actually ran well. He has more speed than he was allowed to show last time, and if he establishes a forward position he can post an upset. **BIG BILL** ran well finishing second in the same race, and he has more speed than the top choice. The runner-up finish by 'BILL was his first start since he was gelded. He is getting better and will not be a maiden for long. **BRAHMS MENDELSSOHN** stretches out for the first time with speed to make the lead if he wants.

Seventh Race

1. Mr. Disrespectful	2. Speed Grazy	3. Canani
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MR. DISRESPECTFUL drops from a pair of Cal-bred stakes into a Cal-bred allowance. Based on his runner-up finish two back on dirt in a race won by Cal-bred star Kings River Knight, **MR. DISRESPECTFUL** figures to start at a short price. He is a front-runner/pace-presser who must use his speed from the inside post in this dirt mile. **SPEED GRAZY** returns from a four-month layoff to a Cal-bred allowance level at which he has won twice. He entered with the "no-claim waiver," which signals optimism. (The waiver period has been shortened from 180 days to 120 days). **CANANI** upset Cal-breds on turf, now he switches to dirt. His pedigree suggests dirt should be his preferred surface.

Eighth Race

1. Yellow Card	2. For All Mankind	3. Jerry's Spirit
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A promising runner-up comeback by **YELLOW CARD** stamps the lightly raced colt the logical choice in this N2X turf sprint. 'CARD missed by a neck in a similar race last out while making his first start in 10 months. He worked twice since, returns at the same level, and with speed figures that match par for this level. 'CARD can wear them down from slightly off the pace. The speed-friendly profile in turf sprints has tempered; closers can win. **FOR ALL MANKIND** is speed from the outside post, switching surfaces after a fast runner-up finish on dirt. Though 0-for-5 on turf, he finished in the money three of those races and figures for a pressing trip outside likely pacesetter **JERRY'S SPIRIT**. If or when that rival falters, **FOR ALL MANKIND** will get first run. **JERRY'S SPIRIT** is speed, shortening to five furlongs after tiring and finishing third at six and a half on dirt. 'SPIRIT can lead the field as far as he can. Long gone? **PROOF HE RIDES** finished a creditable fourth in the same race as the top choice. That was the first start for 'RIDES in 10 months; he can improve second start back.

Ninth Race

1. Stronghold	2. Speed Boat Beach	3. Express Train
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Grade 1-winning comebackers top this Grade 2 sprint. Close call between **STRONGHOLD** and **SPEED BOAT BEACH**. This seven-furlong race may unfold at a strong tempo, the call is **STRONGHOLD** from off the pace. His credentials are genuine; he won the 2024 Santa Anita Derby and finished second in the seven-furlong Malibu Stakes. He popped a splint coming out of the Pegasus early this year, was given time off, commenced a work pattern in May, and returns dead fit in a race that sets up for his rally. **STRONGHOLD** can win if he can catch high-class front-runner **SPEED BOAT BEACH**. The latter won the 2023 Malibu, but a series of setbacks prevented a return to form including a bleeding episode in his comeback this May. 'BEACH commenced his work pattern in early July; he has six published works into this comeback including a fast head-and-head gate work in company with **MAYMUN** last weekend. 'BEACH is fit according to his trainer, but he'll be under pressure breaking from post 2. **SPEED BOAT BEACH** is a threat to wire the field despite pressure. **EXPRESS TRAIN**, also a Grade 1 winner, shortens up after a better-than-looked comeback in a G2 route. He got keen, uncorked a middle move, loomed a threat on the far turn, then flattened out. Not bad. He worked well since, he has sprinted with success, and he is fit shortening from a route. He benefits by the pace scenario and will rally late. G2 winner **DR. VENKMAN** was compromised by inside trips both recent starts, and drew the rail. It is not a good spot for him. **MAYMUN** is two-for-two, and though this is a tough spot for a comeback allowance winner, **MAYMUN** did work heads up with **SPEED BOAT BEACH** last week.

Tenth Race

1. Guiltyofhavingfun

2. Lavender Love

3. Breve

The finale is a messy turf route for Cal-bred allowance fillies and mares. The race has little pace, which benefits front-runners/pressers **GUILTYOFHAVINGFUN** and **LAVENDER LOVE**. They could control the tempo and turn it into a parade. **GUILTYOFHAVINGFUN** stretches out following a decent comeback sprint in which she chased the pace and tired to fifth. In the money both previous turf routes this winter against maidens, 'FUN figures for an up-front trip with **LAVENDER LOVE**, who scored a visually impressive maiden win last out in her first route, and just her second lifetime start. She may not have had much behind her, and her final quarter was not fast (:24.70), but the win was a move forward off her debut. She figures as a contender right back in a race likely to unfold at a modest pace. Also-eligible **BREVE** would be making her third start back from a layoff; she missed by only a length and a half last out in her first route since last fall. Also-eligible **QUANTUM INNERGY** ran better than the line shows last out. She had nowhere to go for much of the stretch, angled outside and finished well to miss by only a length. If she draws in, look for her late.