

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

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Date: 11/3/2017

Race 10: \$150K Senator Ken Maddy (G3) for fillies & mares going 5-furlongs on turf.

Post: 5:17 pm PDT

OVERVIEW

I'm not used to this race being run at 5-furlongs since it's usually held at Santa Anita down the hill, so we'll need to shift gears and focus on this much shorter distance. As you would imagine at such a short trip, there are several in here who prefer to do their running on the front end—and with a 14-horse field, trip is going to be of paramount importance. Which one of these ladies will get the right set-up?

#1 SO SWEETITIZ (6/1) is a cool 5-year-old race mare, but physical issues have prevented her from steady campaigns. She was last seen 399 days ago squaring off against the boys down the hill. That didn't go well, so she's back in with her own sex today. The one time she ran over this course, she drew the rail, stalked the pace, and powered home to win fairly easily, so you know she can handle this tricky post—and she's likely to get the same exact trip today. She fits well in here as the elder stateswoman of the group, but she'll have to be ready to roll of just a series of Los Al works. GRADE: A.

#2 BELVOIR BAY (GB) (4/1), the first Miller entrant, is a versatile sort who has wins on dirt and turf while going both short and long. That said, ever since she turned four, she hasn't been able to get the job done against open-company, settling for the minor awards. Two back, she was 7/5 against allowance runners here at Del Mar, and she failed to do the business, finishing second. She has tactical speed, so she'll get a forwardly placed trip (though she doesn't need the lead and probably won't get it anyway), but she's going to need to show the eye of the tiger today. GRADE: B.

#3 INSTANT RELFEX (15/1) cedes a ton of experience to many of these, since she's a 3-year-old who has only two starts to her name. That said, after a debut win, I really thought she looked like a gal who could easily compete at the stakes levels, when she contested the early pace yet drew off like a very good thing when going 5-furlongs over this course. Of course, that was against maidens, and she failed to replicate that performance in her next start against winners—but that race was at a mile, and she set a very fast pace and weakened. Espinoza will gun hard and hope for the best—and I do think there is plenty of upside here—but she's going to have to battle it out with some proven ladies. GRADE: C.

#4 FIRSTHAND REPORT (7/2) is another versatile lady who has acted on all surfaces and at all distances. She's coming off a recent route win, where she beat male Pennsylvania-breds going 8.5-furlongs at Parx. She also has a turf-sprint win against female PA-breds at that same track. She now has to face open-company, however, after beating up on much weaker horses. On the plus side, she did win a 5.5-furlong turf sprint at Saratoga in the summer of 2016, so she's probably not too far off these—but 7/2 seems awfully short on the morning-line. GRADE: C.

#5 VIGOR (5/1) is a 3-year-old who has run well twice against older winners, but she's come up short both times, getting overtaken in the lane late. That said, those races were at 5.5-furlongs and 6-furlongs,

so today's shorter distance should help her cause. She'll face some pace pressure from Little Jude to her outside, so things won't be easy for her, but her sharp speed makes her very dangerous in here, and you have to respect the connections of Bill Mott and José Ortiz. GRADE: B.

#6 WHAT A TEN (20/1) was just claimed for \$32.K, so she's severely class-compromised against these girls. In her one turf try, she stalked the pace and weakened against much lesser down the hill. GRADE: X.

#7 SNACK SHACK (15/1) has done very nice work as a turf-sprinter, but she's been plying her trade against much lesser foes at Indiana Grand, so she'll have to prove her class today against some solid ladies. Also note that she's a one-way speed type, so she'll have to keep up with Vigor and Little Jude, who also have plenty of zip. I don't like to discount East Coast shippers on the West Coast, but others appeal more. GRADE: C.

#8 LITTLE JUDE (15/1), the second Miller runner, freaked over this course two back when she was allowed to make an easy lead before comfortably winning under Roman and his 5-pound weight-break. She found the downhill course too far for her last time, so the cutback today should have her in the thick of things late—but will she be good enough to win? She is a half to Little Mike, so the pedigree is here for her to continue to develop. I like others a bit more, since she's so one-dimensional, but a Peter Miller turf-sprinter at 15/1? That must be considered. GRADE: C.

#9 LONG HOT SUMMER (9/2) should trip out perfectly in here, tracking a quick pace while waiting to uncork her run—something she's done a few times over this course, most recently when winning the Daisycutter this summer. If you're worried about her race after that, toss it, since she was held at the start and never had a chance to run her race, being declared a non-starter. Also toss her last race, where she had the lead late but was overtaken down the hill. Today's cutback is what she wants and needs. GRADE: A.

#10 STREET SURRENDER (8/1) has done decent work going longer on dirt, so this seems like an odd sport for a girl who is 0-for-3 on turf, and whose last win came when wiring overnight-stakes foes through slow splits going 8.5-furlongs on dirt. She's also been off since August, so part of me thinks that this is just a tune-up for a route race later in the meet. That said, Roman stays put (and he was Little Jude's regular rider). GRADE: C.

#11 PAQUITA COQUETA (CHI) brings some more speed to the proceedings, and while that's usually a good thing, it's not so good when you're likely to be 4-wide with all of the other speed inside of you. There was a time when she'd look really good in here, despite the post, but that was earlier this year when trained by the great Richard Mandella. Since this gal switched barns and went back East, she just hasn't been the same. It wouldn't shock me if she bounced back with a good race, but she seems off-form and up against it from this post. GRADE: X.

CONCLUSION

#9 LONG HOT SUMMER projects to get the right tracking trip—and at 9/2 on the morning-line, she seems very playable, especially since she's a proven older gal going up against some young upstarts. I also wouldn't count out the classy #1 SO SWEETITIZ. Of the younger ladies, I prefer #5 VIGOR, who will be prominently placed and should love the slight cutback in distance. Let price be your guide.