

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

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Date: 11/5/2017

Race 8: \$62.5K optional-claiming/N2X for fillies & mares going 8-furlongs turf.

Post: 3:59 pm PST

OVERVIEW

Shake off that Breeders' Cup hangover, dust off your "Form," and let's get busy for a Sunday "fun-day" at Del Mar. I'll be Scott Shapiro's guest handicapper for the on-track seminar, so if you're at Del Mar, please stop by and say hi at the top of the stretch. Today's contest race is a one-mile turf affair for \$62.5K optional-claiming/N2X runners of the female variety. The rails are at 0-feet, and while there doesn't look to be a super-fast pace, there should be enough early speed to make this a fairly run race.

#1 JEREMY'S LEGACY (IRE) (5/2) took a while to get her second win, but she did it very nicely, going a mile over this course. She had to break from the 10-hole, yet a wide journey didn't matter, as she ran by her rivals as if they were standing still. She hasn't been able to repeat that effort against winners, but two-back, she had some trouble at the start and was hooked wide again—while last time, she was facing some tough restricted-stakes foes. Her two wins have come at Del Mar, so expect a return to form today. **GRADE: A.**

#2 STARLITE STYLE (10/1) has a very nice closing kick, but she's always at the mercy of pace and trip given her preferred running style. She won three in a row at Santa Anita this spring, but her two Del Mar races this summer were just okay. Moonless Sky has her on form—and unless they just go completely crazy up front, I think the exotics are the ceiling for her. **GRADE: C.**

#3 BERNINA STAR (12/1) has had a strange campaign, routing, sprinting, trying turf, etc., so her form is tough to evaluate. She's a 3-year-old who cleared her N1X hurdle going 6.5-furlongs over the main track, coming from way off the pace and benefitting from a meltdown. She didn't get the same pace set-up against N2X types last time, also while sprinting. Her one turf try was just an even effort, but she was facing some very nice 3-year-olds. She looks like a gal who needs everything to go her way (her sprint win came in a pace meltdown, and her route win came loose on an easy lead). **GRADE: C.**

#4 MOONLESS SKY (7/2) has done nothing wrong since relocating to SoCal by way of South Florida. She's run well against some decent Cal-breds, and her one try at this level was an okay fourth, going 9-furlongs on turf. All four of her SoCal wins (including one where she was put up via DQ) have come at today's mile—and since she's making the second start of her form cycle and stretching out, I expect her to run big today. **GRADE: A.**

#5 BERT'S MELODY (8/1) is a Cal-bred who has run some very good races, but her best work has come on or near the lead, and two of her outside foes can make her life very difficult should they choose to do so. If they don't, however, this gal has shown bravery before, winning the Fran's Valentine last year. The big knock is that she's a 6-year-old race-mare whose last two races leave something to be desired, so she

could be a case of “when mares go bad”—but at least she gets a 5-pound weight-break to help her carry her speed. GRADE: C.

#6 CHEVAL BLANCHE (20/1) makes her first U.S. start after a mixed-bag of races overseas, where she won two turf sprints and one 8-furlong synth race. Since the spring, however, she has gone off form, so it’s no surprise that she shows up on these shores, adding Lasix. She’s a 3-year-old who could certainly wake up today, but with only three works on her tab, I’m guessing she’s going to need one. GRADE: C.

#7 CORDIALITY (3/1) looked sharp here over the summer, wiring N1X types in facile fashion. Her first try at this level wasn’t bad either, setting the pace yet getting overtaken in the lane going 9-furlongs. She’ll appreciate the cutback, and she should get a perfect stalking trip right outside Bert’s Melody. She looks obvious in here, but do note that she’s gotten away with very slow paces in her last two starts, so it will be interesting to see her chasing a somewhat quicker pace today. GRADE: B.

#8 PLASTERED (4/1) loses Roman but gains Prat, so you can be sure she’ll get a great stalking trip, waiting to pounce into the lane. That said, she’s another one who has either had easy leads or perfect set-ups in her best races, so she will have to earn it today. Also note that she’s getting back on turf after two failures against overnight-stakes foes and one failure at today’s level (as the 17/10 choice). She does have a win on turf, but she got an easy lead to beat \$40K claimers. This field is a little bit better than that. GRADE: C.

CONCLUSION

I’ve always liked #4 MOONLESS SKY, and I see no reason not to like her again in here. She has a good stretch run, and Desormeaux knows exactly where to place here depending on the pace scenario. If it’s hot, he can bide his time off the pace; if it’s not, he can have her in tracking range.