DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

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Date: 11/23/2017
Race 6: $100K Red Carpet Handicap (G3) for fillies & mares going 11-furlongs on turf.
Post: 1:30 pm PST

OVERVIEW

First off: Happy Thanksgiving! I appreciate everyone reading and following along—so thank you. Secondly: we have an early holiday first post of 11:00 am—plenty of time to get all of our horseplaying in before the traditional feast. Lastly, today's contest race features a very deep 13-horse field of fillies and mares going 11-furlongs in the Red Carpet Handicap (G3). I'm hoping we can sniff out a price here, but just so you know: through Saturday, favorites on the turf were striking at an unprecedented 52.27 percent—so it's no surprise that we've had a little trouble trying to pick up points in this contest, since we're always looking for alternatives to the logical choices. Anyway…let's look at today's field. (Note: the rails are at 6-feet.)

#1 LASEEN (IRE) (12/1) has yet to win in the U.S., but she's run well despite being very unlucky in many of her starts. She has had some rough trips, and she's also been stuck behind some really slow paces—so her paper form isn't as bad as it looks in comparison to the others in the field. I've always thought this gal had the ability to win a graded-stakes race, and I know she'll be just fine at today's distance (since her last win came going 12-furlongs). I also like the jock change today—I'll take Pereira over Espinoza on the turf any day of the week and twice on holidays. GRADE: A.

#2 DYNAMIC MIZZES K (15/1) ran very well going today's distance in an overnight-stakes race here over the summer, but she got an absolute perfect trip and still wasn't good enough to get the nod. She'll have to do better than that performance, and her subsequent two races since then have her going in the wrong direction, having lost to a few of today's competitors. GRADE: X.

#3 EVO CAMPO (IRE) (4/1) is your 122-pound highweight by dint of her Grade 3 victory two back while winning impressively going 12-furlongs at Santa Anita. She's shown that she can run all day, so she should have no trouble going today's route of ground—especially since she's likely to get a good tracking trip from this cozy inside slot. You can toss her October synth race at Golden Gate—which surely was just a leg-stretcher for this. GRADE: B.

#4 VICTRESS (30/1) has done good work on the dirt in the minor leagues, but the one time she tried SoCal turf ladies recently, she was well-beaten in an AOC at Santa Anita way back in January, after going off at 18/1. She'll need to pull off the major upset in here. GRADE: X.

#5 LA MANTA GRIS (15/1) is an East-Coast invading 3-year-old who gets in at a feathery 114-pounds and also attracts the services of Desormeaux—all major positives. The negatives are she doesn't look quite good enough at this point in her career to beat the best in here nor does she have the early speed to get the right kind of tracking trip in a race that doesn't look to have too hot of a pace. Still, you should always give East Coast invaders a closer look against our turf runners. GRADE: C.

#6 KISS ME NOW (BRZ) (20/1) was a multiple Grade 1 winner in Argentina, but she's yet to find the winner's circle here in the States, including a defeat three back to Responsibleforlove (IRE). She doesn't have much early speed, so Lobo experimented with the blinkers last time, to no avail. They come off today, so if this girl were to contend for a slice, she'd need everything to go her way in this full field. GRADE: X.

#7 RESPONSIBLEFORLOVE (IRE) (7/2), the first Drysdale entrant, gets a pound break from Evo Campo (Ire), who beat her back in April in the Santa Barbara (G3), yet she's a tick shorter on the morning-line. I'm not surprised by that since she's a much better filly now than she was earlier in the year. In fact, she just missed in the Rodeo Drive (G1) after getting stuck behind horses for a considerable amount of time. She's also versatile, so Talamo can have her wherever he wants depending on the pace. GRADE: A.

#8 DO THE DANCE (20/1) has done decent work here at Del Mar, but she's always been a nice allowance-type as opposed to a graded-stakes animal. She's also unproven at today's distance. GRADE: X.

~~#9 GALILEO'S SONG (IRE) (5/1) goes out for Chad Brown, and that's really all you need to know about this gal being a strong contender. The distance wont' be an issue, and she's a neck away from being a Grade 3 winner. We all know East Coast turf horses are better than what we have out here, so you'd be foolish to try and take this gal on, especially since she's carrying only 119 pounds. GRADE: A.~~

#10 EARRING (6/1) is a nose away from being a Grade 3 winner—and if you think she might have been a little short last time when losing to How Unusual as the 2/1 favorite, then you have to project she'll be sitting on a big race, making the second start of her form cycle for Proctor, who knows how to point a horse to a race. She's very obvious in here. GRADE: B.

#11 BIRDIE GOLD (15/1) won a Grade 1 in Peru before trying the best in the world in the Breeders' Cup Filly & Mare Turf (G1), where she failed to make a dent at 31/1. She also loses Smith—and even though this gal is getting class-relief today, she's a 3-year-old facing some tough older horses. GRADE: X.

#12 DOMESTIC VINTAGE (30/1), the second Drysdale runner, is a 3-year-old who was 41/1 in the Autumn Miss (G3) against fellow sophomores. She finished second-last that day, never really getting untracked. This is a tougher spot. GRADE: X.

#13 HOW UNUSUAL (6/1) is in very good form right now, never running a bad race in all four of her starts after a January freshening. She has a decent enough stretch run to have a say in the exotics, but the post is tough, and her 0-for-7 record at Del Mar is a bit concerning. She's also unproven at this distance, while others have shown they can excel going this far. GRADE: C.

#14 LOTTIE (9/2) drew the short straw today, stuck all the way out in no-woman's land—which is why she might opt to run against the boys on Friday instead. If she does run here, she must be considered based on her graded-stakes-placed form and proficiency at the longer turf distances. Prat's presence is another positive, especially since this gal should take a step forward in her second start since a brief freshening. GRADE: B.

CONCLUSION

There are literally a baker's dozen of places to land here—so let price be your guide. My long-shot play will be #1 LASEEN (IRE). I know she needs a career best and a ton of things to go right for her, but she'll be a big price and worth a nibble in a contentious race with no major standout.