

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni
On Twitter @ScatoniSureShot

For more information on *Optix*, visit www.optixeq.com or on Twitter @OptixEQ

Date: 9/3/2018

Race 6: \$25K claimer contested at 8.5-furlongs on turf

Post: 4:35 pm PDT

OVERVIEW

We end the meet with a wide-open \$25K claimer for older horses going 8.5-furlongs on the turf. Good luck to all those in with a shot! And thanks to everyone for reading and following along—and for coming to the seminars or just stopping by to say hi. I always enjoy talking horses with fellow players! Let's see if we can end on a high note...

#1 SECRETO PRIMERO (5/2) just won at this level two back before finding tougher \$32K foes a bit out of his reach last time. That race two back is certainly good enough to win, but do note that he was the beneficiary of a perfect trip on a course that favored runners with tactical speed, which this one has in abundance. I've always been skeptical of him around two turns, and he proved me wrong two back—but that was at a mile. Today he has to go an extra half-furlong, and that makes me want to play against. GRADE: C.

#2 TRIFECTA (8/1) just ran third at this level, finishing behind Secreto Primero when going a mile. He should improve with the added ground today, but he does have a tendency to idle in the lane. That said, he always seems to be around the wire, so he's usable in your exotics, but he'll need a step forward for the win. GRADE: C.

#3 PLAY HARD TO GET (6/1) dropped from \$62.5K to \$40K last time and he failed to fire. Now he takes another drop to \$25K today. Clearly, this 7-year-old is in the twilight of his career, so we'll see if he wakes up on the drop today, since he does have races on his form from earlier in the year that would make him very tough in here—and he should get a good trip. But we are guessing as to what kind of horse he'll be today. GRADE: C.

#4 **THE BIG TRAIN (5/1)** has always had a nice late kick, so he should be a very tough foe to fend off when the real running starts, especially since he'll be running for a tag for the first time. Toss his last race, where he was off slowly and never had a chance against much tougher, and focus on the fact that he drops for a trainer who spots them where he believes they can win. Van Dyke stays put—and that's a positive; so is the fact that he earned an **OptixNOTES** "Improve" out of that last race. GRADE: A.

#5 GLORIOUS CROWN (12/1) ran a decent third in his first try going long on turf, so he should be able to step forward off that, since he came home in a respectable :23.67 seconds—which is pretty solid for this level. The problem is: he's already lost a few times against beaten-claimers, so he'll need to show the eye of the tiger today. I'm interested in using him in my exotics at a nice price, but I prefer others for the win end. GRADE: B.

#6 TEMPLE KEYS (5/1) has always been a ploddy sort who has picked up plenty of checks, but note that he needed time-restricted foes to get his last victory. In his defense, he's spent most of his career facing tougher, so at least he gets some class-relief today. Still, I don't think his plodding style is suited to the way this course has been playing all meet long, so things will have to go the right way for this off-the-pace runner. GRADE: C.

#7 COMES THE DREAM (4/1) just beat time-restricted claimers fairly easily last time, showing off his customary late run. He now has to face open-claimers, so we'll see if he can pair up efforts. He's always been pretty honest, and it's nice to see Prat take over for the injured Nakatani, but I feel like what you see is what you get—and that's a horse who has already lost a few times at this level. GRADE: C.

#8 MONGOL G (15/1) should ensure a good pace, since he's been leading the way while facing allowance types back East. That kind of speed can be very dangerous when dropping in for a tag here—and note that he's eligible for the ship-and-win bonus. He should be in front turning for home—and then we'll see if he's good enough to fend off the stretch-runners, but at 15/1, he's an intriguing prospect in a field with many uninspiring animals. GRADE: A.

#9 STREET MOXIE (20/1) adds blinkers and retains a 5-pound weight-break after failing to threaten against Secreto Primero last time. He'll have to face that foe again, so he'll need to recapture some of his old form when he ran well up north while wearing the hood (so the equipment change is a major positive). Still, his best work came while attending the pace up north, and he might find himself chasing Mongol G through the early stages, thereby softening him up late. GRADE: C.

#10 MR. OPPORTUNIST (12/1) hasn't been able to beat time-restricted claimers, so he'll need to do better today against open (and against a few who already have him on form). He does have tactical speed, so Maldonado will look to keep Mongol G honest, but that makes him just look like a pace factor to me. GRADE: C.

CONCLUSION

I'll go to war with two horses with different run styles: #4 THE BIG TRAIN from off the pace, and #8 MONGOL G leading the way.

If you'd like to learn more about **OptixEQ**, visit www.optixeq.com, and for a bonus Del Mar Race of the Day analysis from **OptixEQ**, click here: <https://optixeq.com/2018-optixeq-del-mar-race-of-the-day/>