

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

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Date: 7/27/20

Race 6: \$25K claiming event contested at 8-furlongs on turf (rails at 18-ft.)

Post: approx. post 4:30 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

The Del Mar turf races continue to deliver with full fields and competitive racing—and today's contest race is no different: a wide-open \$25K claiming event contested at a mile on the lawn with the rails at 18-feet. There should be an honest pace, but you don't want to be too far back with the rail setting out today. There are a lot of places to land in this tough race, so seek out the best overlays and definitely price shop. I'm looking at two morning-line 15/1 shots.

#1 KYLEMORE (15/1) is a little interesting in here, since it seems like this erstwhile frontrunner has learned to relax a little and rate—something that came in handy two back when he won at this level while racing on dirt. His turf form is perfectly acceptable, and if you go back to January 19, you'll see that he ran a good fourth at this level despite a very wide journey. His tactical speed and the rail draw means he could upset the apple cart at a juicy 15/1 on the morning-line. **GRADE: A.**

#2 PUBILIUS SYRUS (12/1) is a tough nut to crack, since he's a former class horse who is starting his descent down the class ladder, having just lost against \$32K foes while running for a tag for the first time. Seemingly, he would have been fully cranked for that comebacker, but he just ran evenly while chasing the pace. I doubt he'll be as high as his 12/1 morning-line, since he was just 5/1 against tougher and his best races would crush this field—but can this former stakes winner turn back the clock or will he continue to head the wrong way? Tough to know—but you can pay to play to find out if the price is right. **GRADE: B.**

#3 HOOTIE (7/2) is your second-choice on the line, and that makes sense since he always seems to be right around the wire at the end, and he gets some class relief today after running against protected company. That said, his three wins all came against restricted company (maidens/N2L/N3L), so he'll have to prove himself in the open-claiming ranks. He'll get a good tracking trip, and his best race puts him in the frame, though he's hard to take at 7/2 in such a big field. **GRADE: B.**

#4 STAY GOLDEN (30/1) has never been on turf and seems a bit class-compromised after just winning a restricted \$16K claimer in all-out fashion while racing on Los Alamitos dirt. He has early speed, so he should be a pace factor, but I'm not sure how long he's going to carry that speed before he packs it in. **GRADE: X.**

#5 OCEAN FURY (4/1) did decent work back in 2019, but after a trip to the Middle East, where he never raised a gallop in three races, he came back to the States and ran an absolute clunker against \$16K optional-claimers while racing 8.5-furlongs on the dirt at Oaklawn. He was 13/1 that day, attended a slow early pace, and wilted. By all accounts, it was a poor effort, but maybe we should forgive it, since this guy is really a turf horse, and he now returns off a freshening as a new gelding and running for a higher price tag—both positives. I'm surprised he's as short as 4/1 on the morning-line, however, based on that poor

last race and the presence of seldom-used jock Figueroa. I think he can run a much better race today, but I would want 6/1 or higher. GRADE: B.

#6 NEVER EASY (8/1) was 4/5 against restricted N3L foes two back, attended a modest pace, and was edged out late. He was claimed for \$35K out of that race by Lerner, who tried to move him up in class and put him on dirt. That didn't work out, so the shrewd trainer is regrouping today and running him back on turf for this \$25K tag. It's a sensible move, and this one's tactical speed means he should get a very good forwardly placed trip with the rails out 18-feet. It's tough to move up a horse off Mandella, but this one can be useful when spotted properly, like today. GRADE: B.

#7 CONTAGION (8/1), the second Lerner trainee, was just claimed off O'Neill for \$32K out of a race in which he finished fourth. He stalked the pace and failed to produce the necessary oomph to hit the board. Maybe those foes were just a little too tough for him; hence today's \$25K placement. Like his stablemate, he has good tactical speed, so he should trip out as well. GRADE: B.

#8 CONQUEST LEMONRAID—program scratch.

#9 CAPTIVATE—program scratch.

#10 **EROTIC (15/1)** has the look of a live long-shot to me because you can basically ex-out his entire body of work while he was trained by Carava, since he only started this guy once at a flat mile on turf even though that distance accounted for one of Erotic's two victories. He's now trained by Puype, who sensibly puts him in a spot (i.e., a suitable surface, distance, and level) where he can show his best stuff. He looks sneaky in here. GRADE: A.

#11 WORTHY TURK (6/1) is a Prat/Miller production, and that duo is impossible to ignore. That said, I think this one will be an underlay based on that fact, and it's not like his form is anything spectacular, settling more for the minor awards. Still, he did look good beating restricted N2L foes two back, coming home strongly in under 23-seconds, but this is a much tougher group—and he has to break from a tricky post. He's definitely a contender, and I can't fault anyone for using him; it's just a matter of what his price will be, and I'm guessing it will be shorter than 6/1 if he's truly live. GRADE: B.

#12 THE CREEP (15/1) has early speed, and he'll be forced to use it in order to gain good position from out here—and that's bound to take the starch out of him late, especially since there are a few horses to his inside who also like to be in the vanguard early. On the plus side, he does have a nice second at this level two back, so he fits nicely with these, and he should be primed to run a good one second off the bench after fading late against tougher \$32K foes last time. Still, the post and the pace scenario do him no favors. GRADE: C.

#13 FRENCH GETAWAY (3/1) is your 3/1 favorite based on the fact that he has done excellent work when spotted properly in the claiming ranks. But there are some concerns. First off, the post is horrendous, so Smith will have to work his magic from no man's land. Secondly, all of his best races have come at distances beyond a mile, so I can see a scenario where he comes flying late but doesn't get up in time. He's obvious on his past form and figures, but I'm taking a stand against him today. GRADE: C.

#14 MITHQAAL—program scratch.

CONCLUSION

Wow. What a difficult race—and because of that, I’m just going to bombs away. You see my two “A’s” with **#1 KYLEMORE** and **#10 EROTIC**, so I’ll be looking at them. But in all honesty, this really is a race where you can let the board decide where you want to go, since a few of these are bound to be big overlays. My advice to you would be: make a value line, and play accordingly! And don’t settle for a short price.

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