

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

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Date: 8/1/20

Race 10: \$250K Bing Crosby (G1) contested at 6-furlongs on the main track

Post: approx. post 6:30 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

The stakes race named after Del Mar's founding father, the \$250K Bing Crosby (G1)—a 6-furlong main-track affair—drew an evenly matched field this year, especially with the likely scratch of the much-respected McKinzie, who is supposed to opt for another spot. One of these runners will be crowned with Grade 1 glory. Who will it be?

#1 LEXITONIAN (6/1) has a few big races on his résumé, but he hasn't won a graded-stakes race since the age-restricted Chick Lang (G3) last year on the Preakness undercard. He did have the lead in the Phoenix (G2) last fall at Keeneland but was passed late to finish third, so you know he's at least capable of competing with some good animals (in a race that was won by Engaged, with the total pro Whitmore finishing second). He's coming off a nice N3X win at Churchill, where he earned his second-best figure. If he moves forward today, he would be good enough—but what trip can we expect down on the dreaded rail (which has been deep all meet)? GRADE: C.

#2 ANYPORTINASTORM (6/1) is a portrait of consistency—a very fast animal who shows up for business every time. You don't finish in-the-money in 15-of-16 career races without being a professional racehorse, so you have to admire this guy's body of work. He also has sharp early speed but doesn't need the lead, so Hernandez can put him wherever he wants (though it makes sense to go from the inside). The only knock is: can he win a Grade 1, since the only time he ran in a graded-stakes, he was headed by Law Abidin Citizen in the Longacres Mile (G3)? Luckily for him, he catches a fairly evenly matched field (with no real Grade 1 types in here), so he'll have every chance to show his best stuff. That said, I'm worried about the inside being deep today. GRADE: B.

#3 **DESERT LAW (5/1)** is a cool Cal-bred who can step up and run a big race every now and again. He also looks to be sitting on a peak effort after a decent third in the Thor's Echo, which really just looked like a prep race for this, since he was never really hurried into a race that was won by his stablemate who attended a slow early pace. This guy finished really well to get third in that race (after breaking from the rail), so I expect a big move forward today—and it should be noted that he finished a close second in this race last year. GRADE: A.

#4 MCKINZIE (2/1), by all accounts, is meant to be scratched from the race, with Baffert opting for the 7-furlong Pat O'Brien (G2) later in the meet. There's no denying this one's talent and versatility, but if he does run, you have to take him on for two reasons: 6-furlongs seems like it might be too short; and he offers no value in the contest. GRADE: C.

#5 P R RADIO STAR—program scratch.

#6 **FASHIONABLY FAST (7/2)** is a terrific Cal-bred who rattled off six wins in a row before running second in the Tropical Bend (G2) when he just couldn't match strides late with McKinzie—no shame

there, since McKinzie is a very good 7-furlong animal. Now this consistent runner cuts back a smidge, and he should be super-fit with that 7-furlong race under his belt. He'll also enjoy a nice forwardly placed trip while racing toward the outside. GRADE: A.

#7 LAW ABIDIN CITIZEN (8/1), the first Glatt entrant, is a multiple Grade 3–winner who has been extremely versatile throughout his career with sprint and route wins, as well as dirt and turf wins. He headed Anyporinastorm in the Longacres Mile (G3) last summer, and he's coming into this race off a sharp upper-level allowance win, where he set the pace and never looked back as the 15/10 favorite. He should get a nice stalking trip today, and he'll be fit cutting back a bit after that 6.5-furlong victory. The only question is: is 6-furlongs too short? His best work has been as an elongated sprinter, so we'll see how he does today. Still, it's hard to knock his professionalism. GRADE: B.

#8 WILDMAN JACK (6/1) has done excellent work as a turf-sprinter, but he's never raced on the main track, so we'll see if he can transfer his classy turf form to the dirt. He's also coming off the worst race of his life, where he failed to fire in the Shakertown (G2) at Keeneland when he was sent off as the lukewarm 3/1 favorite. Before that, he was sharp in the Daytona (G3) at Santa Anita, and he even won a turf-sprint at Meydan. If he can transfer his turf form, he'll be in the hunt, but that's a tough ask in a Grade 1. GRADE: C.

#9 COLLUSION ILLUSION (9/2), the second Glatt trainee, is a talented 3-year-old whose only bad race was when he was eased and had to walk off. Other than that misadventure, he's a perfect 4-for-4, including an extremely professional win last time in the age-restricted Laz Barrera (G3), where he had to wait for room before exploding to reel in the frontrunner. He ended up winning easily, showing some real quality, reminiscent of his Best Pal (G2) victory from when he was a juvenile. As a lightly raced 3-year-old, he still has plenty of room to improve—and if he does so today, look out. But as you all know, I'm always hesitant to back sophomores against elders (until the fall), especially in graded-stakes events, so I want to monitor the price. GRADE: A.

#10 HEARTWOOD (20/1) has tactical speed, so he'll get a good stalking trip on the best part of the track, so you should upgrade him based on that fact alone. Unfortunately, he does seem like a cut below the best in here, since he's a bit exposed at the graded-stakes level, and I'm not sure a prep at Belterra is going to be the right path to Grade 1 victory here in California. That said, he has been competitive in the past against some quality animals if you think he can move forward enough today to get the job done. GRADE: C.

CONCLUSION

With the likely scratch of McKinzie, it seems unlikely we'll get anywhere near 7/2 on **#6 FASHIONABLY FAST**, so I'm going to monitor the action on **#3 DESERT LAW** and **#9 COLLUSION ILLUSION**, with a slightly stronger look to the Glatt trainee simply because he'll be on the better part of the racetrack.

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