DEL MAR FEATURE RACE OF THE DAY

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Date: 11/22/20
Race 8: $100K Cary Grant Stakes for Cal-breds going 7-furlongs on the main track
Post: approx. post 3:55 p.m. PST

OVERVIEW

We've got nine races slated for today's Sunday card with a very good feature, which also happens to be today's Contest R8: the $100K Cary Grant Stakes, a 7-furlong main-track affair for Cal-breds. Before we dig in, just a quick reminder: don't forget to tune in at 11:00 a.m. PST for my "Best Bet" seminar, where I go over certain sequences and wagering strategies with a special guest. This week's guest is Dylan Donnelly, a sharp young player who is currently leading the NHC Tour and who just won more than $250K—that's right: $250K!!!—in the Breeders' Cup Betting Challenge, finishing third. Should be a great seminar, and I can't wait to talk wagering strategy with Dylan. It streams live (and archived) on the Del Mar Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube pages, but for more information, click here: https://www.dmtc.com/calendar/detail/bestbet.

#1 APPRECIATED (20/1)—program scratch.

#2 BRICKYARD RIDE (6/1)—program scratch.

#3 TAKE THE ONE O ONE (3/1) is a nice horse who has sharp route speed, and is cutting back after several two turn races, where he has run well against decent horses. He will be super-fit on that turnback, and I can see him in a very good forward position as Bettor Trip Nick dictates the early pace. Back in 2018, he won two Cal-bred stakes races, including the 7-furlong Real Good Deal over this track, so there is precedence here. Note that Galilean has beaten him twice, but one of those races was on turf, and the other was at Los Al, so I can be forgiving. However, I don't like that Koriner has been a little chilly the last few months. That said, he's a legit contender. GRADE: B.

#4 SURFING STAR (12/1) showed ability and versatility back in 2018, but he had an abbreviated 2019 campaign, which resulted in a long vacation. His comeback race was decent, and I loved him last time second off the bench, but I suspect he bounced, just failing to kick on when the real running started. Still, he showed a little interest in the lane, and that should set him up nicely for his third start off the bench. Note that Pyfer is named to ride, but she doesn't get her weight-allowance since this is a stakes race, so she'll have to prove she can ride on equal terms here today—but I've always liked this horse, and I expect him to run a peak race today. Will it be good enough? I'm willing to pay to find out at a huge price. GRADE: A.

#5 OLIVER (20/1) has been very competitive in almost all of his races (including a second in this race last year at 5/2), but he has lacked the eye of the tiger of late, which is probably why O'Neill decided to geld him for his return after a June freshening. I expect him to trip out well, and you have to respect his perfect in-the-money record here at Del Mar. He looks like a solid contender to me, and I'm completely baffled by his 20/1 morning-line. GRADE: A.

#6 EL TIGRE TERRIBLE (7/2) won the Real Good Deal here against fellow 3-year-olds, so we'll see if he can win at 7-furlongs again, but this time against older company. He is versatile and has a decent stretch run, so you can expect him to show up with his very best today, but he will need to improve a bit to beat some of the older foes in here. That said, with Miller calling the shots and Prat riding, anything is possible. GRADE: B.

#7 BETTOR TRIP NICK (15/1) has sharp early speed, and he should be able to dictate the pace as the only real frontrunner in here now that Brickyard Ride has been declared from the race. I suppose there is a world in which he can get brave on the lead if left all alone early, but there are some decent horses in here, and I expect one of them will come and run him down. Still, because he'll have a pace advantage, you could use him in your exotics. GRADE: C.

#8 GALILEAN (5/2) is a really nice Cal-bred, who has done everything they've asked of him: dirt, turf, long, short—it doesn't matter. He always shows up for business against his fellow Cal-breds. That said, his barn is a little cold right now, and he's unlikely to offer any value, so I'm looking elsewhere for my contest plays, even though this guy is the best horse in the race. GRADE: B.

#9 LOUD MOUTH (12/1) was game last time when beating open N1X types at Santa Anita. He dueled early and drew off to win convincingly. It was a return to good form after several blah races where he finished behind a few of these. If he runs back to that last race, he could have a say, but I don't think he will. First off, he's not fast enough early to run with Bettor Trip Nick, and secondly, he could bounce to the moon after that career best. GRADE: C.

#10 ROOKIE MISTAKE (8/1), the second O'Neill runner, is a decent 3-year-old who cuts back from a turf mile to today's 7-furlongs—typically a solid angle. He's done good work over this track, and he should have no trouble at all at today's elongated sprint distance. The issue is: is he good enough? El Tigre Terrible beat him in the Real Good Deal Stakes (though this guy did have some traffic issues), so can he turn the tables on that foe while also besting older foes (including Galilean who just beat him two back)? He's not impossible, but he'll need a career-best. GRADE: C.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned, #8 GALILEAN is the best horse in the race, but he will offer no value, and his barn is a little cold. Same can be said for the solid second choice, #3 TAKE THE ONE O ONE. Because of that, I'm price-shopping. I expect the honest **#5 OLIVER** to really outrun his odds as a first-time gelding who should get a good trip—and if you're looking for another price, **#4 SURFING STAR** is good enough on his best day to upset the apple cart here. I also can't fault anyone for backing #6 EL TIGRE TERRIBLE who is a 3-year-old with plenty of upside. This is a good race!

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