

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

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Date: 7/31/21

Race 10: \$300K Bing Crosby (G1) contested at 6-furlongs on the main track.

Post: approx. post 6:36 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

What an excellent renewal of the \$300K Bing Crosby (G1), a 6-furlong main-track affair that also serves as a “Win and You’re In” race for the Breeders’ Cup Sprint (G1)—and the winner of this race will certainly have earned his berth to that prestigious event. Nine horses have been entered, and there should be an honest pace. I’m going to look for someone to track the pace and power home through the lane.

#1 SHOOTERS SHOOT (15/1) has done very good work at 7-furlongs, and that’s because he was a decent route horse with speed, so that cutback suited him well. Six-furlongs, however, is a completely different ballgame—and breaking from the rail will be no picnic for a horse who will have to be used early to prevent getting buried. I also wonder if this is a prep for the 7-furlong Pat O’Brien (G2) later in the meet. GRADE: X.

#2 VERTICAL THREAT (8/1) is a lightly raced 4-year-old who is a cold-stone 6-furlong sprinter, and if he’s matured at all since his 3-year-old campaign, there’s no telling how fast this son of Tapiture can be. Last time he was seen, however, was back in November when he destroyed fellow sophomores in the mud on a sealed track at Mahoning Valley. He ran off the screen that race and has needed a lot of time since. I’m very curious to see how he runs today, but I’m tempted to watch one—though I will say this: I’d like him a lot more if he were drawn outside, since he has very good tactical speed but doesn’t need the lead. I’m afraid that stuck down inside, however, he’s going to have to be used a little too much early. GRADE: C.

#3 **C Z ROCKET (5/2)** is my top pick, but I’m not crazy about the price. He should get the perfect tracking trip in a race that is bound to have a quick pace—and you have to love the fact that Geroux bothers to come out to ride. Plus, this guy has been awesome at the sprint game since being claimed by Miller for \$40K last April. He also has a win over this track, so he is the one to beat. GRADE: A.

#4 LAW ABIDIN CITIZEN (12/1), the first of three Glatt runners, is a very cool horse who has knocked heads with some good animals—but a few of those good animals, whom he faces here, have beaten him before. He has sharp early speed, so you can expect him to be in the vanguard early, but he doesn’t need the lead to win, so he can sit a good stalking trip. Will he be good enough to power home for the W? I prefer others. GRADE: X.

#5 QUICK TEMPO (12/1) invades from back East and attracts Rispoli, so that must be considered, especially since he’s a lightly raced 3-year-old with plenty of upside. Last time, he came off a layoff and ran a decent second against older runners in the Iowa Sprint, so he can hold his own against the veterans—but what kind of trip is he going to get? He’s been on the lead at the first call in every one of his races, and he’ll have to deal with the heat of Brickyard Ride from the outside, who brings his California speed to the proceedings—not to mention a few others who like to be forwardly placed and

pushing the pace. On the plus side, Rispoli is so good at getting horses to rate, so maybe this one can lay off a bit. Still, he will need a career-best to beat the best in here. GRADE: C.

#6 COLLUSION ILLUSION (4/1) won this race last year, and I think he looks pretty good right back, since he's going to get a good pace set-up to flatter his strong stretch run. Will he be fit and ready to win however? Well, he has won fresh before, and Glatt rarely brings back a short horse, so I'm fine with the layoff. What I don't like is that Prat ends up on one of the stablemates here, so you know he had a choice and ended up selecting another. Still, that just means this one will be a good price, and I think you might get better than 4/1. GRADE: A.

#7 EIGHT RINGS (10/1) hasn't really been able to string together races, and it's not like his form since leaving the juvenile ranks two years ago is any good. Last time, he came off a layoff, was bet to 8/5 favoritism, and flopped in the Triple Bend (G2), losing to one of today's foes. I know it's tough to ignore anything that Baffert sends out, but I'm fine letting this one beat me. GRADE: X.

#8 DR. SCHIVEL (7/2) was privately purchased after two sharp wins here last year as a juvenile, including a dominating win in the Del Mar Futurity (G1). Glatt laid him up, took his time, and brought him back to run a corker against N2X foes at Santa Anita, where he stalked the pace and showed grit to get the win. He should move forward again today second off the bench, and Prat stays put, so that tells you all you need to know. The only negative things to consider are: the price and the fact that he's a 3-year-old facing some quality older runners. GRADE: B.

#9 BRICKYARD RIDE (7/2) is blazing fast, so no matter how the race shapes up, this one is bound to set a quick pace. Last time, Hernandez rode him for the first time, and he perfectly rationed this guy's speed to beat five other statebreds in dominant fashion. Before that, he was too fast for his own good in two races, which prompted the jock change. If you think this one can take some heat and still hang on to win, then go for it—but I'm going to bet that he gets softened up a tad and gets run down. Still, there's no denying this guy's brilliance, and if Rispoli on Quick Tempo doesn't go hard from the jump, then this guy will have a shot to wire the field. GRADE: C.

CONCLUSION

I'm going to bet that Quick Tempo and Brickyard Ride (and others) ensure a more than honest pace, setting things up for **#3 C Z ROCKET** and **#6 COLLUSION ILLUSION**, but I really think you need to play the board a little bit in here and find the best overlay (for instance, if **#8 DR. SCHIVEL** sneaks away at a fair price).

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