

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

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Race 5: Cal-bred \$20K optional-claiming/N1X for fillies & mares going 6.5-furlongs on main track

Post: approx. post 4:00 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

A very competitive group of Cal-bred \$20K optional-claiming/N1X fillies and mares will line up in this 6.5-furlong main-track affair. There are plenty of places to land here, so demand value.

#1 LITTLE MISS ELLIE (12/1) has run well at this level but hasn't been able to get the job done. She'll now have to try and clear this condition while breaking from the tricky rail. She'll be fit on the cut-back—and Cerin is having a great meet—but I can see her running on late for a minor award. GRADE: C.

#2 LI'L GRAZEN (6/1) has won at this level plenty of times before, which is why she keeps running for the optional \$20K tag—and which is why she's been a popular claim item. That said, this 7-year-old mare is a late runner who needs things to go her way. I can see her running on late for a piece, but she'll need some luck for the win. On the plus side, she finally gets off the rail after three straight races where she drew the inside slot. GRADE: C.

#3 MISS GLORIOUS (15/1) is a 3-year-old filly making her seasonal debut after hitting the shelf in December after running a poor race in the Soviet Problem. She does have decent early speed, so you can expect her to be in the vanguard early—but there is other speed in here, and she'll have to be fit off a very long layoff. There is ability and upside here, but I'm fine watching one today (even with the blinkers back on and the addition of Lasix). GRADE: C.

#4 NO COVER CHARGE—program scratch.

#5 SMOOTHLIKEBUTTAH (15/1) is a 3-year-old who broke her maiden going two turns back in March, and she's picked up plenty of minor awards since—but she hasn't gotten that elusive second win. She's cutting back after several route races, so at least you know she'll be fit—but she'll need a step forward today for the W. GRADE: C.

#6 WISHTHEYALLCOULDBE (15/1) is a 3-year-old who found stakes foes too much after just breaking her maiden back in June. This is a much more sensible spot for her to try and get her second win, but she looks too slow, if you believe in speed figures. I can see her grinding away, but I think the exotics are her ceiling. GRADE: C.

#7 SEVEN SISTERS (6/1) just broke her maiden in wire fashion against \$50K types, so we'll see how she does against classier winners today—and with other heat in the race. Note that she's a lightly raced 5-year-old, so I'm also not sure how much upside there is here considering she's had only three career starts. GRADE: C.

#8 **TAKETHEDIAMONDLANE (15/1)** will sucker me yet again, as I've backed her the last two times—and she's run horribly. So why am I interested? Well, I really liked this gal's debut way back in

2019 over this track, but things just haven't worked out for her since. She has never been able to string together races, and she's been against the bias in her two dirt starts at this level. The fact that Samantha Siegel and Brian Koriner still want to race this 5-year-old after two poor races and a long layoff makes me think that they believe there is still something here. Throw in the price, the early speed, and the 5-pound weight-break, and maybe we can get her to the winner's circle. GRADE: A.

#9 TAMING THE TIGRESS (5/2) is a 3-year-old who is given morning-line favoritism off a big win against starter foes. It was a nice win, but this field is tougher—and that big race really came out of the blue. Perhaps she has figured things out and will continue to move forward—but as a 3-year-old in a big full field against some older animals, I'm fine letting her beat me. GRADE: C.

#10 KRISTI'S TIGER (4/1) has done fine work at this level, including a win at this condition on turf, so she figures big right back. She makes the second start of her form cycle, and she should trip out from this outside position. I know she's settled for a bunch of minor awards while racing at this level on dirt, but she's too consistent to ignore, especially at 4/1. GRADE: A.

#11 MUCHA WOMAN (12/1) has shown speed against age-restricted claimers, but this 3-year-old hasn't been able to carry that speed through the wire. Her few tries at this level weren't any good, but they came on turf. Can she reverse form and get the W today? She looks a cut below the best in here—and she'll have to show more oomph in the lane. GRADE: C.

#12 ANOTHER EDDIE (6/1) is a 3-year-old who grinded away to a third-place finish last time at this level when going 6-furlongs. She gets an extra half-furlong to play with, so that will certainly help her cause. Both of her wins have come on turf, but I do think she's fine on dirt, so it wouldn't shock me if she had a say in the outcome—especially since I think there is some upside here. GRADE: B.

CONCLUSION

The logical contenders are all perfectly fine in here, but I don't want anyone less than 5/1, so I'm just going to plant a flag with my wise-guy horse, **#8 TAKETHEDIAMONDLANE** at 15/1. You'll thank me later if she wins. If she doesn't, well, that's horse racing!

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