

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

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Race 6: \$80K optional-claiming/N1X for 3YO fillies going 8F on turf (rails at 30-ft.)

Post: approx. post 3:06 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

Welcome back to the Del Mar Bing Crosby meet—home of the 2021 Breeders' Cup, which will take place this Friday and Saturday. Before we get there, however, we've got an 8-race opening day card to sink our teeth into (first post: 12:30 p.m. PDT). Today's contest race is a competitive \$80K optional-claiming/N1X for 3-year-old fillies going a flat mile on the lawn with the rails at 30-feet. The obvious ones look perfectly fine, but I'm looking for something sneaky to happen.

#1 SUPER GAME (20/1) has sprint speed and breaks from the rail, so I'd have to think that Van Dyke is going to gun hard and hope for the best—but I'm not sure a wire job is in the cards for this Cal-bred. GRADE: X.

#2 FEATHERS (IRE) (7/2) looked good beating \$40K claimers three back, and then she backed up that form by running a good fourth in the Del Mar Oaks (G1) and a good second at this N1X level going 9-furlongs at Santa Anita. She'll be fit cutting back, and she gets Johnny V. to do the steering. She's an obvious contender, but I'm going to look for someone less obvious in here while trying to find a price. GRADE: B.

#3 NAZUNA (IRE) (8/5) is your 8/5 morning-line favorite, and I have to think it's because she's trained by Chad Brown, because her U.S. form is nothing to write home about. That said, her overseas form is pretty darn good, with a second place finish in a Grade 3 at Epsom over the summer when trained by Varian. She now makes her second start for Brown after failing to threaten in the Pebbles at Belmont while rank and seemingly needing the race. She should improve off that (since it was likely a prep), but she's not great contest value at 8/5. GRADE: B.

#4 MORAZ (5/1) is interesting to me, since she has good graded-stakes form from earlier in the year, albeit on dirt—but her comeback race (her first on turf) over the summer at Del Mar was a really good third (by a neck) at this level. She was likely a short horse, so I think she can do better today while making the third start of her form cycle—and I'm willing to forgive her recent dirt defeat at 3/5 since she was facing older horses. I don't think we've seen the best of her. GRADE: A.

#5 CARPE FORTUNA (7/2) has done good work at this level, but therein lies the rub: she's run well enough to pick up some minor awards, but she hasn't quite broken through. She will one of these days, since she is pretty versatile in terms of running style, but I like her more for underneath today. GRADE: B.

#6 DERBY QUEST (30/1) makes the second start of her form cycle, so she can't run any worse than she did last time when coming off an April layoff. Still, her two-turn form before that 6-furlong turf-sprint wasn't anything special, so I'm having a hard time seeing her beat these today. She looks to need lesser. GRADE: X.

#7 CHASINGSERENDIPITY (15/1) has been a popular claim, now making a start for Cerin, who took her off Garcia for \$50K after Garcia had taken her off Wong for \$40K. Two back, Feathers beat her on the square, so she'll need to turn the tables on that foe. You can ex-out her race after that when Van Dyke made no effort to save ground, so this gal couldn't show her best stuff. That said, is her best stuff good enough to beat some salty allowance runners? I'll watch one. GRADE: X.

#8 INNER BEAUTY (IRE) (15/1) tried to wire them last time going 9-furlongs, but she was easily overtaken despite setting a really slow pace. Feathers swooped right by her, so this gal will need to do a lot better today. On the plus side, she was likely a short horse that day, since she was coming off a January layoff. That said, her previous form isn't very good, but Red Barons must have seen something they liked, since they brought this one here from overseas, and that operation is really good with imports. Still, I think others will prove better—but you can slot her underneath at a big price. GRADE: X.

#9 MISS COSTA RICA (8/1) will be the wise-guy play in here, since I can make excuses for her recent races, and I love the fact that Rosario—who always cleans up when he comes out here—bothers to ride. Three back, this one ran fifth but was a short horse while coming off a long layoff. In her next start, she was facing older foes. And in her last start, she was racing down the hill, where she finished fifth but came home in very quick time, suggesting she should be ready for a stretch out today. Plus, the price will be right. GRADE: A.

CONCLUSION

I think #9 MISS COSTA RICA could easily outrun her 8/1 morning-line odds, so she would be the play for me, though picking her does require a bit of a leap of faith. If you want a more logical contender, but one who will still be a decent price, #4 MORAZ still has plenty of upside and should be sitting on a peak effort.

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