

# DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

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**Date:** 11/4/21

**Race 7:** \$100K Let It Ride Stakes for 3YOs going 8F on the turf (rails at 30-feet)

**Post:** approx. post 3:38 p.m. PDT

## OVERVIEW

It's the day before the Breeders' Cup: so let's see if we can pad our bankroll with some winners! Today's contest race is an interesting renewal of the \$100K Let It Ride Stakes, a restricted race for 3-year-olds going one mile on the lawn with the rails at 30-feet. It's restricted to horses who have not won a sweepstakes of \$60K other than state-bred at one mile or over since April. Got it?

**#1 LINCOLN HAWK (IRE) (8/1)** has a very nice late kick, so you can toss his last race when he was closer than usual to a very hot pace. He gets a jock upgrade, so you can expect Johnny V. to just sit chilly and look to produce one late run while saving all the ground. He will need a step forward, but I don't think we've seen the best of this guy. GRADE: A.

**#2 CREW DRAGON (7/2)** should be tough, stretching back out and with a good N1X victory over this course to build on. Two back, he had to break from the 11-hole in the Del Mar Derby (G2), so you can just draw a line through that race. Note that he lost by a head in the Oceanside, so this restricted spot is perfect for him. GRADE: A.

**#3 NERVES OF STEEL (20/1)** was 34/1 against N1X foes three back, so he seems in deep today, especially since he hasn't been able to beat starter foes in his last two starts. GRADE: X.

**#4 SONIC BREES (15/1)**, the first O'Neill entrant, hasn't been seen since he ran fourth in the Best Pal (G2) way back in August 2020. He now makes his 3-year-old seasonal debut and first two-turn turf try while attracting Rispoli. That must mean the connections really like the way this guy has matured since his short juvenile campaign. I'm tempted to watch one, but it should be noted that this guy was good enough as a 2-year-old to beat Dr. Schivel, who has trained on to be a very good stakes-caliber sprinter. GRADE: B.

**#5 COASTAL KID (20/1)** was sharp in victory against state-bred stakes runners at Emerald Downs while racing on dirt. He does have some California turf form to build on, but he'll need a big step forward today. GRADE: X.

**#6 TEAM MERCHANTS (6/1)**, the second O'Neill runner, adds blinkers after two blah dirt races where he stalked the pace and failed to kick on. Granted, he was facing some tough stakes animals, so I can be forgiving. Three back, he beat elders while sprinting on the dirt here at Del Mar (though his trainer was fined \$2K for a drug violation in-training with this runner). He's only raced on turf once, and that was a non-effort, as he stumbled early and was eased. He should trip out, and he's certainly run fast enough to win, but there are just too many questions to be answered. GRADE: B.

**#7 COULTHARD (IRE) (3/1)** had an eventful journey in his comeback race last time, finishing fourth in an N2X against older runners while going down the hill. He should be able to build off that—and even

though he's never been two turns, he certainly acts like a horse who should be able to stretch out. At least Rosario thinks so, and that's good enough for me. That said, he's the morning-line favorite who is trying something new for the first time, so demand value. GRADE: B.

#8 BIG FISH (10/1)—program scratch.

#9 MAN FRIDAY (7/2) looked good beating NIX foes in his first start for Cerin, who took him off Maker for \$50K two back. While that was a really good race, he's facing some tougher foes today, so I'm kind of surprised his morning-line is the same as Crew Dragon's, since Crew Dragon looks so much better to me. Anyway, you can't really knock a horse who is in good form, even though I prefer others. GRADE: C.

#10 PETRUCHIO (8/1) is looking at a wide journey from out here, and that's too bad, because I'd like him a lot more if he were drawn inside. As it is, he's going to have his work cut out for him, especially if he's going to be way off the pace, like he was in his last two starts over this course, where he was only able to put in mild late bids. Note that he did run second in the one-mile Singletary, and that he also ran third in a Grade 2 on dirt, so there is some ability here, and you can use him in your exotics at a price. GRADE: C.

### **CONCLUSION**

#2 CREW DRAGON is my top pick in the race, and #7 COULTHARD (IRE) looks to be sitting on a big one, but both of those runners are sure to take action. Therefore, #1 LINCOLN HAWK (IRE) is likely to offer the most value in terms of contest play.

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