

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

On Twitter @ScatoniSureShot

Date: 7/30/22

Race 8: \$400K Bing Crosby (G1) contested at 6-furlongs on the main track

Post: approx. post 5:37 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

Today's Bing Crosby (G1), a 6-furlong main-track affair for the best sprinters in America, is one of two contest races along with the 8.5-furlong San Diego (G2), which is Race 10. Lucky for you, I've written up analyses for both races! But let's start with the Bing Crosby (G1)...

#1 DESMOND DOSS (10/1) is a very cool Cal-bred who is in sharp form right now, but this is a tough spot for a horse who hasn't faced open-company in more than a year. He's also in a tough spot down at the rail, since he's not fast enough to make the lead, and he'll have to settle behind horses and hope to get a good tracking trip—then he'll have to prove he's even good enough. GRADE: X.

#2 SHAAZ (7/2) has plenty of ability, but he'll get a class test today since his best races in SoCal came against tomato cans as the odds-on favorite. When he went to Lone Star to face Grade 3 foes, he faltered as the 2/1 favorite. That said, he's coming off a May freshening since that race, and Baffert is deadly when he's pointing to a sprint race. The bullets suggest this guy will be ready to roll. He's a legit win-candidate, but I'm going to look elsewhere for value. GRADE: B.

#3 BAGBOSS (8/1) makes his SoCal debut after two solid victories back East against allowance foes. He's never run a bad race, so I admire his consistency, but he's facing the toughest competition of his career, so we'll see how he responds in here. I can see him getting a good stalking trip, but he'll need to step things up in the speed-fig department to beat the top few today. GRADE: B.

#4 DRAIN THE CLOCK (4/1) is a quality racehorse who has been terrific around one-turn while racing all over the world. He's coming off an uncharacteristically flat effort at Gulfstream Park where he stalked the pace and faltered as the 4/5 favorite. Granted, he did throw his head at the start, and I'm guessing he probably needed that race after coming off a March layoff after a run in the Dubai Golden Shaheen (G1). I expect a much better performance today from this Grade 1 winner. GRADE: A.

#5 PRINCIPE CARLO (6/1) is a cool Cal-bred who has finished first or second in 17 out of 26 starts, so hats off to him. Not bad for a horse who was claimed a few times for \$20K before going on to win a Cal-bred stakes and then running second in a Grade 2. He also happens to like Del Mar, so that's another feather in his cap. That said, he's facing a tough task today, since he's always been slightly more effective as an elongated sprinter. Maybe he can vie for a small slice though, if you're a believer. GRADE: X.

#6 HOWBEIT (20/1) is capable of running some big races, so you can draw a line through his last race where he stumbled at the start and lost the rider as the 7/10 favorite in a prep race up at Pleasanton. I'm sure the connections would like to have gotten more out of him in that race, but what can you do? He should move forward today, and his very best would give him a shot, but it should be noted that he was no good in the Pat O'Brien (G2) here over this track last year. GRADE: X.

#7 LETSGETLUCKY (6/1) is a Cal-bred who franked his SoCal form by going to Oaklawn Park back in April to run second in a Grade 3. That was his best race, but it should be noted that it came on a sloppy/sealed track, which is no surprise given his pedigree. He's now coming off an April layoff to face better animals. He must be working great guns because I'm not sure why he's slotted so low at 6/1 on the morning line, especially considering his 0-for-3 record here at Del Mar. GRADE: X.

#8 DIAMOND OPS (12/1) just ran here on July 23, finishing third in what was surely just a prep race for this. He's proven against graded-stakes animals, and I have to think he's going to run a big one today. Will it be good enough for a 7-year-old who is in the twilight of his career? I like him more for underneath, but it wouldn't shock me if he upset the apple cart today. GRADE: B.

#9 AMERICAN THEOREM (4/1) has always had ability, but I think it has taken him a while to fully come into his own, which he did last time when looking good in a game victory in the Triple Bend (G2) going 7-furlongs at Santa Anita. He tracked the pace and ran on nicely to get the W. I like that he's been freshened since then and pointed to this race (though 6-panels might be a smidge too short for him). He's also drawn really well outside, so he can just sit the perfect, in-the-clear trip. GRADE: A.

#10 GET HER NUMBER (12/1) is a 4-year-old who is pretty versatile; oh, and he's also a Grade 1 winner, so there is class here as well. He's coming off a very nice prep in a 7-furlong affair at Churchill Downs, so I have to think he's going to run a big one today, especially since he's got a good post for his stalking style. GRADE: A.

CONCLUSION

I know I have three "A" horses, which is not ideal, so you'll have to decide whom you'll want to play. I know the outside horse, **#10 GET HER NUMBER**, will offer the best price, so that's where I would probably land, but I also think that 4/1 on **#4 DRAIN THE CLOCK** or **#9 AMERICAN THEOREM** would be pretty good value as well, making this a tough race to assess.

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By Frank R. Scatoni

On Twitter @ScatoniSureShot

Date: 7/30/22

Race 10: \$300K San Diego Handicap (G2) contested at 8.5-furlongs on the main track

Post: approx. post 6:37 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

So who is in it to win it today in the \$300K San Diego Handicap (G2)...and who is just prepping for the big dance—the Pacific Classic (G1)—later in the meet? That’s what we need to decide in today’s contest race, which is contested at 8.5-furlongs on the main track. We’ve got a nice assortment of handicap horses, including the heir apparent victor of the 2021 Kentucky Derby (G1)!

#1 THERE GOES HARVARD (5/1) has really come into his own, rattling off three victories in a row, including an impressive win in the 10-furlong Gold Cup (G1). He’s versatile, can act on any surface, and still has license to improve as a 4-year-old in very good hands with Michael McCarthy. All that said, I have to think that this is a prep race for him, coming off a May freshening and with the Pac Classic (G1) at 10-furlongs down the road. GRADE: C.

#2 **DEFUNDED (5/1)**, one of two Baffert runners, was collared late by the rail horse in the Gold Cup (G1), but that was a pretty solid effort for a horse who probably doesn’t want 10-furlongs. He shortens up today while coming off a brief freshening, and he looks to me like a horse who will be in it to win it, since this distance is right up his alley, while the longer Pac Classic (G1) might be a bridge too far. GRADE: A.

#3 MANDALOUN (4/1), the well-traveled Brad Cox trainee who will probably be declared the 2021 Kentucky Derby (G1) victor at some point in the future, has run some big races against good competition, so you can throw out his poor race last time at Churchill, where he was likely just running around the track while coming off a February layoff. He should be much tighter today, and there is still plenty of upside here for this 4-year-old. That said, I have to think he is just prepping for the Pac Classic (G1). GRADE: B.

#4 STILLETTO BOY (6/1) is a cool horse who has earned \$1 million the hard way with only three wins but picking up plenty of checks in big races along the way. He was very sharp when taking the Californian (G2) at Santa Anita, but he made an easy lead and was never really challenged. He won’t have such a luxury today, and I see him better suited to the exotics. GRADE: C.

#5 SENOR BUSCADOR (20/1) should move forward today making the second start of his form cycle after coming off a very long layoff. Still, will his best be good enough? This guy’s best work has come against weaker company, and the last time he faced Mandaloun, he was pasted (though he did have a wide journey). I think he’s a decent horse, but he faces a stiff class test today. GRADE: X.

#6 PARNELLI (15/1) has finally started to put things together, and it should be noted that he dead-heated with There Goes Harvard two back, so it’s not like this guy is outclassed by this field, even though his previous graded-stakes form was not good. That said, he looks a bit on the slow side compared to some of the others, so he’s going to need a career-best. On the plus side, however, he’s probably in it to win it,

since I can't really see him winning the longer Pac Classic (G1). He also likes this track, so perhaps you can use him for underneath. GRADE: C.

#7 TRIPOLI (6/1) won the Pacific Classic (G1) last year, and by all accounts, it looks like this is just going to be a prep race for that event where he'll then have two races to build on to be sitting on a peak effort later in the summer. That said, he can still run well today, second off the bench after a very nice run in a one-mile turf race, where he came home strongly despite likely being a short horse. I like him more for next time. GRADE: B.

#8 COUNTRY GRAMMER (5/2), the second Baffert and the 125-pound high-weight, is going to take a bunch of money, but I have to think that this is just a prep for the Pac Classic (G1), since this guy is a proven 10-furlong horse who is a multiple Grade 1 winner. He could still be good enough to beat these, even if he's not fully cranked, but he offers little value in a race that really isn't the main goal. GRADE: B.

#9 ROYAL SHIP (BRZ) (4/1) is the elder statesman of the group as an accomplished 6-year-old, but it should be noted that he is 0-for-3 over this track (including a defeat at 8/5 in this race last year), and several of these have him on form over the past year or so. His best race is certainly good enough—and he's in good hands with Mandella—but I have to think this too is a prep race for him, coming off a May freshening and with a near-miss in the 10-furlong Gold Cup (G1) last year. GRADE C.

CONCLUSION

I'm not going to overcomplicate things here: I think #2 DEFUNDED isn't the most talented horse in this group, but he looks like a horse who will be fully cranked for this Grade 2 while so many others seem to be using this as a prep race for the Pac Classic (G1). Let's hope he gets overlooked and goes off at more than 5/1.

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