

# DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

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**Date:** 8/18/22

**Race 4:** \$20K/N3L conditional-claimer for fillies & mares going 8-furlongs on the main track

**Post:** approx. post 3:33 p.m. PDT

## OVERVIEW

This is a pretty tough contest race, with a bunch of unreliable \$20K female conditional-claimers going one mile on the main track. It's a non-winners of three lifetime, so there aren't too many in here with a will to win. I am just going to pick a few bombs in here, since I'm not crazy about the obvious-looking ones, especially since they all like to be up on the early pace, so I'm going to look for a pace collapse and a whacky result!

#1 WILD ARCH (5/1) was 27/1 at this level last time, and she outran those odds to finish second in a 6-furlong sprint. She'll now stretch out, which is fine for her, since she does have a win at today's distance, and a quick pace should help her tracking style—but the rail hasn't been the best place to be, so I'm going to look elsewhere. GRADE: C.

#2 LADY PROTONICO (20/1) was claimed for \$10K two back at Churchill Downs, and her first SoCal start at the same level was an okay fourth at 20/1, where she ran on through the lane, showing some late life, which suggests she might actually do much better today on the stretch-out, even though this will be her first try around two turns in 12 career starts. Engler is having a rough meet though, and this gal is jumping up in price tag, so a win seems unlikely, but she could easily spice up the exotics at a big number. GRADE: C.

#3 LIVIN' AT THE BU (6/1) won two in a row up north (on synth and dirt) before coming to Del Mar and getting pasted on turf against much better animals. This is a more sensible spot, and I almost wonder if that turf race was a prep for this, since this gal is now where she belongs. I can also see her getting a very good stalking trip behind a bunch of speed horses, but that also means that she'll probably be stuck down toward the inside, which hasn't been the best part of the track. That said, she has some upset potential. GRADE: B.

#4 BRITTLE AND YOO (7/2) has to be considered, getting some class relief today after facing much better animals. She also attracts the leading rider and has tactical speed, so Hernandez will have options—and I have to think he's just going to suck back a little and let the outside speed horses go so he can stalk the pace in a good spot. She's what I call "obvious but unexciting." GRADE: B.

#5 RED PANTY NIGHT (6/1) looked good beating N2L foes last time at Los Al with a forwardly placed trip. In fact, both of her wins have come over that track, so we'll see if she can transfer her form to Del Mar. Last fall, she did run second here in a \$20K maiden-claimer, so I'm not too worried about her taking to the surface, but what kind of trip is she going to get with speed to her inside and outside? She does know how to stalk, but she will be part of a quick pace, and I think that might soften her up late. But she's another contender in a wide-open race. GRADE: B.

#6 V BUCKS (3/1) looked very good beating up on \$16K/N2L foes last time as a waiver-claim, coming off an October layoff to dominate 10 other foes in that 6.5-furlong affair. She'll now try to move forward today while stretching out for the first time. Does she move forward or bounce to the moon? Well, at her 3/1 morning-line, I'm going to look elsewhere, but she can certainly win right back if she moves forward today—but as a stretch-out sprinter, she seems like another one who will be attending a quick early pace. GRADE: B.

**#7 PAWNEE (8/1)** will get wise-guy consideration in here because I think she'll get the best trip, tracking outside from several lengths off a quick pace. I know her recent form is abominable, but there was a time when this gal was running creditably against some really nice statebreds, so I'm not willing to give up on her just yet. Ruiz took her for \$20K out of a Los Al race against tougher Cal-bred N1X types, and I like that he spots her here against conditional-claimers while stretching her back out. She could run dead last, but if she runs back to some of her older races, she could beat this weak group. GRADE: A.

#8 TROPICANA GIRL (5/1) has two wins, both wire to wire, so I'm sure Gonzalez is going to gun hard from out here to try and make the running—but the outcome will depend a lot on what the horses to her inside do, since there are a few with early speed drawn inside of her. Last time at this level, she pressed the pace from the outside and weakened at 13/1 in a 6-furlong sprint. She's also a 3-year-old, so she's going to need to do better today. GRADE: C.

**#9 SUGAR KISSES (15/1)** will be the benefit of a pace collapse, since she's the best closer in the race thanks to those synth races up north where she showed she can pass horses. The question here, however, is class. She couldn't beat much cheaper at Pleasanton, so she'll need to show she can handle more expensive foes here at Del Mar. That said, this race does have chaos written all over it, so this gal is not impossible at a big price, so why not take a bomb? GRADE: A.

### **CONCLUSION**

I'm going to look for this race to fall apart, and if it does, I think the two beneficiaries would be **#7 PAWNEE (8/1)** and **#9 SUGAR KISSES (15/1)**. I don't trust either of them, but I also don't trust any of the logical ones either, so I'm willing to take a shot in here since I think this race has chaos written all over it.

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