

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

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Date: 11/19/22

Race 9: \$40K optional-claiming/N1X for fillies & mares going 8.5-furlongs on turf (rail at 18-ft.)

Post: approx. post 4:30 p.m. PST

OVERVIEW

Today's contest race has shades of the summer meet: a big full field filled with competitive horses. I love it! Let's see if we can sniff out the winner of this tough \$40K optional-claiming/N1X for fillies and mares going 8.5-furlongs on the lawn with the rails at 18-feet. I think you can price shop in here.

#1 CARPE FORTUNA (4/1) always seems to run her race, and that race hasn't been good enough, as she's been stuck at the N1X level for a good while now. She could win if others falter, but 4/1 on a horse who has a tendency to settle for the minor awards doesn't light my fire. GRADE: C.

#2 LADY CLEMENTINE (GB) (12/1), the first Papaprodromou entrant, has been overmatched against stakes foes, but I won't be so harsh on her, since her U.S. debut was smashing. That said, Bravo—who is Georgie P.'s go-to guy and who rode this one to her maiden victory—choose the stablemate. Obviously, you lose nothing with Rispoli on the turf, but that is a bit telling to me. GRADE: C.

#3 GIMME MO BABY (6/1), the second Papaprodromou, is where Bravo ends up, and I'm not surprised, since this gal ran a very good fourth in the Autumn Miss (G2), finishing ahead of a few of these despite that 10-post.Two back, she ran an okay fifth at this level at Kentucky Downs, which usually attracts some salty runners. She looks sneaky to me. GRADE: A.

#4 GILLIAN ELIZABETH (4/1), the first Gaines charge, smoked home her final quarter last time in under :23 seconds, and that is blazing. It's indicative of a young horse who continues to progress, so it wouldn't shock me if this one ran a corker today. I also like that top jock Hernandez takes the call, and he's been making all the right moves this meet. GRADE: A.

#5 KITTY KITANA (GB) (7/2) just ran a very good third in the Autumn Miss (G3), despite having to break from the 11-hole. She gets a better draw today, and her come-home times are above par, so she should be flying home late—and her tactical speed means she'll get the jump on plenty of the others. GRADE: A.

#6 EMERALD LAKE (12/1) was 16/1 at this level last time, and she was in contention until she lacked the needed oomph and finished fourth. She'll need to do better today. GRADE: X.

#7 URBAN FAIRYTALE (6/1) has two things going for her: first off, she's trained by Puype and that dude is cagey. Secondly, Johnny V. takes the call—so that tells me that this Virginia-bred is live today despite the fact that she couldn't beat state-bred and restricted foes at Colonial. She'll need a step up, but she's a must-use in your exotics. GRADE: B.

#8 FOUNDER'S DAY (12/1) looked good beating starter-allowance foes last time, but the waters get much deeper today. If she wins, I lose. GRADE: X.

#9 ALMOST A FACTOR (15/1), the second Gaines runner, is a bit of one-paced sort who has been running longer. You know she'll be fit, but this 5-year-old mare has had her chances at this level, to no avail. Maybe she can sneak into the exotics while just grinding away through the lane. GRADE: X.

#10 BATYAH (12/1) is a lightly raced 4-year-old adding blinkers for the first time, so that must be taken into consideration, as should the fact that this one is trained by Graham Motion, who brought a very live string out here—so that begs the question: why is Van Dyke riding? I'm sure Motion could have had the pick of the crop, and yet he ends up with a jock who is winless so far this meet. Maybe this one needs one off the September freshening? That said, I'm sure I just put her right in the winner's circle (since a step forward would put her in the frame)! GRADE: B.

#11 OVER ATTRACTED (20/1) is a versatile sort, but her best work has come against weaker foes, and the last time she tried this level, she was 102/1 and ran to those long odds. Pass. GRADE: X.

#12 LADY JAE (6/1) (AE) was nearly 4/1 at this level two back, and she ran ninth (albeit with some trouble). Her recent race down the hill against stakes runners was much better, but this is at 8.5-furlongs, so we'll see if she can replicate that last effort under these circumstances. GRADE: X.

#13 DRAMATIZER (8/1) is on my sh*t list, since I've bet her many times but didn't bother with her last time, since she has been toiling at this level for a very long time. Well, the barn change made the difference, as this gal finally got her N1X win, closing nicely from off the pace in that 9-furlong affair. And therein lies the rub: this race is probably too short for a deep closer. GRADE: X.

CONCLUSION

I have three "A's" in this excellent race, so let the board decide, but if I had to rank them based on value, I'd go: **#3 GIMME MO BABY (6/1); #4 GILLIAN ELIZABETH (4/1); #5 KITTY KITANA (GB) (7/2).**

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