

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

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Date: 7/27/23

Race 6: \$50K starter allowance contested at 5-furlongs on turf (rails at 24-feet)

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

OVERVIEW

It was only a matter of time before we got our first 5-furlong turf sprint for a contest race—and our first starter-allowance (which was the staple condition the past six months at Santa Anita). So here we are: today's contest race: a 5-furlong turf affair for starter-allowance foes with the rails at 24-feet. It drew a field of 12, but only nine will greet the starter—and what a competitive race it is!

#1 DEVIL MOON (3/1) took a while to break his maiden, which came two back in start number 12, but he looked sharp when beating six other \$50K foes in that 6-furlong turf affair. His first start against winners was an okay third at 7/1 on dirt, so this seems like a good spot for him to get back on the lawn. He has speed and drew the rail, so you know what to expect. GRADE: B.

#2 POWERTRAIN (12/1) is a 3-year-old who was 15/1 at this level last time, and he never got involved while making his first SoCal start for Capestro, who claimed him for \$50K in April at Gulfstream Park. It's hard to support this one on form, but I do like that a shrewd trainer is now adding blinkers and moving this one to the turf. I think he will outrun his odds, but I think we should watch one. GRADE: X.

#3 SINGLE TRACK MIND (IRE) (4/1), the first Glatt entrant, broke his maiden last time in start number ten, but that was his first start for a tag, so this 3-year-old answered the call when spotted properly. Interestingly, Glatt will add blinkers today off that win (which always confuses me), so we'll see if this guy will be more involved early, since his previous running style was a tracking one. He looks perfectly fine, but it's interesting that win-rider Rispoli sticks with the rail horse (though you lose nothing with Hernandez, obviously). GRADE: B.

#4 STAFFORD TO KUPP—program scratch.

#5 RAKA RAKA CRUZ (12/1) will be the wise-guy play, despite the fact that this 3-year-old's paper form is nothing to write home about. So why am I interested? First off, I know that Berrios did excellent work when teaming up with Gulfstream Park invaders last meet—and at good prices—so the fact that he's on board makes me think this one can run a little. I also like that he has sharp early speed. He's never been on turf before, but he does have Tapeta form. GRADE: A.

#6 TIGERHORN (FR) (4/1), the second Glatt trainee, figures to run a good one, third off the bench after two solid races at this level while going just a furlong longer. Franco will have to be aggressive, but this one is tactical, and at least you know he'll be finishing nicely today while cutting back. GRADE: B.

#7 SHARONA'S WILD BOY (15/1) has run well enough at the \$50K starter level up north (on all surfaces) to pick up a few checks, but he's yet to find the winner's circle. I can see him chasing the pace and perhaps holding on for a slice, but I can't back on the win end. GRADE: X.

#8 LANSDOWNE (GB) (5/2) is certainly the one to beat from a speed-figure perspective, since his last two numbers are pretty good for the level, but he's been a beaten-favorite three times in a row now—and all of those have come at the \$32K beaten-claiming level, so I'm in no hurry to take him at a short number. Also note that he needed 6.5-furlongs to get his maiden win. Sure, he is an obvious contender, but he does us no favors in the contest. GRADE: X.

#9 PAPA TIGER (10/1) has tactical speed, so you can expect Maldonado to hustle hard from out here—but that means one of two things: he'll have to use too much energy to clear; or if he doesn't clear, he's going to be stalking four-wide. Either way, that makes things tricky for him on the win end. That said, I've always liked Kitchingman, so if this guy wins, I'll tip my cap. GRADE: X.

#10 TOP GUN CLASSIC—program scratch.

#11 TOM HORN (4/1) is a 3-year-old who has sharp dirt speed, but he's never been on turf before—and he drew a tough post. He's also a Cal-bred facing tougher foes after just breaking his maiden at Los Al. Miyadi is terrific in all of the relevant categories, but I'm tempted to watch one—though I find it odd that this guy is as short as 4/1 on the morning-line. He must be working well. GRADE: X.

#12 BELMONT BILL—program scratch.

CONCLUSION

I have a hard time with these 5-furlong turf sprints, especially when the field is filled with former maiden-claimers who can't really be trusted. There's a reason why so many horses are tabbed in the 3/1 to 4/1 morning-line range—because they all seem kind of the same. Which is why I'm interested in a new face in the crowd: **#5 RAKA RAKA CRUZ (12/1)**. He might not be any good, but I'm willing to pay to play in a race as suspect as this.

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