

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

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Date: 8/30/24

Race 8: \$20K/N3L for fillies and mares going 5.5-furlongs on the main track

Post: approx. post 6:30 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

A big field goes postward in today's eighth race, a \$20K/N3L conditional-claimer for fillies and mares going 5.5-furlongs on the main track. I think there's a standout in here, but we all know that these levels aren't exactly the most reliable. If it's not the super-obvious lady, then it's anyone's race.

#1 RYDER'S CANDY (15/1) will have to go hard from the rail, and that will likely compromise her chances late because she's not really a speedball, so she'll have to use up a lot of energy early. Note that Frey and Saavedra do good work together, and they win at prices, so don't rule this one out entirely, but her fastest races have come at Los Al, and this isn't Los Al. GRADE: C.

#2 JUST IS (9/2) has failed three times at this level already, so perhaps a drop is in order. Don't get me wrong: she's run okay and picked up some checks, but she hasn't really shown the eye of the tiger. At least she does have speed, so she can be prominent early, and then if the track is playing to speed, perhaps she can ride a bias to victory—but I prefer others. GRADE: C.

#3 CLASS CLOWN (5/2) drops in class, has speed, and adds blinkers. If she doesn't win today, she might never win ever again. This is a career soft spot for her—and if she runs anywhere near her decent races, she should crush this field. That said, her two wins have come at Los Al, so that's something to keep in mind. Still, this is her race to lose. GRADE: A.

#4 GILA—program scratch.

#5 DEFICIT MAJA (30/1) was 25/1 at this level last time, and she ran eighth. She's a 3-year-old who will need to run a lot faster, and it should be noted that her best work has come on synth. GRADE: X.

#6 DR. RAY D. (6/1) has never run on dirt, but she was facing classier animals back East when doing just fine on the synth. Hess has been spotting them well at this meet, and I can't imagine he would have bothered shipping her all the way out here if he didn't think she could handle dirt. Cedillo is having a quietly solid meet thanks to his aggressive riding style. Don't sell this one too short. GRADE: B.

#7 PRINCESS MAGIC (12/1) has been off for more than a year, so she comes back protected as a waiver-claim. I have to think this gal is just prepping today, especially since she's racing one level above her eligible condition. She can run in an N2L instead of here against tougher animals. GRADE: X.

#8 SOLID TUNE (30/1) does have some excuses for all three of her races since Marquez claimed her for \$20K last summer. Note that he hasn't given up on this gal yet, still running her at the level of the claim instead of dropping her to a more sensible level. Perhaps there is more here than meets the eye? You have

to go back a long time to find a race that is fast enough to win this, but you could use her in your exotics, or even in the contest if you need a big bomb. GRADE: B.

#9 ANYBODY'S CHOICE (12/1) hasn't been seen since October, but she was facing better animals last year, so this is a return spot where she can actually be competitive. She has tactical speed, and she did fine work over this track last year. She's not the worst 12/1 shot I've ever seen. GRADE: B.

#10 SHES JUST FLUFFY (7/2) actually won at this level back in June when she was still able to run in an N2L, so that's something to consider. Toss her last two races against tougher and focus on the fact that she's now back in with her friends. She has tactical speed, so she can be forwardly placed, but she'll have to avoid a very wide journey from out here. GRADE: B.

#11 BARBERA (6/1) is a decent lady who has done work on dirt and synth, and you have to love that she won over this track last year. Note that she ran a tough-luck second at this level back in October when she was claimed out of that race. Well, new trainer Stute ran her for \$16K in her next start, and McLean and Ordonez claimed her right back. She's been off since December, so she comes back as a waiver-claim, so it's possible she might need one—and the post is a bit tough—but she is certainly good enough to win here if she's ready. GRADE: B.

CONCLUSION

I really think #3 CLASS CLOWN (5/2) should win this race, and she should be a very short price when she does. If she's not hammered in the win pool, then I'd be very concerned. If that's the case, you can have your choice of any of the "B" contenders I labeled above. I think they are all capable of winning, so I would seek out the one who offers the most value on the board. That said, if you need a big bomb, #8 SOLID TUNE (30/1) isn't the worst 30/1 you'll ever bet on!

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