

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

On X [@ScatoniSureShot](#)

www.FrankScatoni.com

www.OptixEQ.com

[Double Trouble Live](#) on YouTube

Date: 7/19/25

Race 7: \$100K restricted Wickerr contested at one mile on the lawn (rails at zero feet).

Post: approx. post 5:03 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

Today's Wickerr, a one mile turf race with restricted conditions, drew a really nice field of graded-stakes caliber runners. There are a lot of good, evenly matched horses in here, and I have to think the smart play is to fade the morning-line favorite, who is coming off a November 2022 layoff.

#1 WATSONVILLE (20/1) should not be 20/1. He's a Grade 2 winner who went awry last summer here at Del Mar and needed time off from August to June. His comeback race down the hill had to be a prep, and Glatt doesn't win at a nearly 40 percent clip second off the bench by accident. Plus, no one boots home more price horses on this circuit than Pereira. GRADE: A.

#2 NINEELEVENTURBO (20/1) is an 8-year-old who has had a nice career, but he's not the type of horse you can expect a wow race from at this point in his career. He does have some speed and an aggressive jock, so he figures to be up on the early pace, but I'm not expecting him to be around late. GRADE: X.

#3 BEYOND BRILLIANT (7/2) is a Grade 1 winner with more than \$776K in earnings, but he hasn't been seen since November 2022, and that's a long time gone, especially for a trainer who likes to give them a run off the bench before they show their best stuff. I have to watch one. GRADE: X.

#4 FINAL BOSS (6/1) likes to be on or near the lead, and I'm expecting a decent early clip in here, so I'm having a hard time seeing him winning the battle and the war. GRADE: X.

#5 IL BELLATOR (20/1) is an honest racehorse who always shows up for work, but this guy's best work was on synth at Golden Gate, so it's hard to overlook his 0-for-7 turf record. GRADE: X.

#6 ZIO JO (8/1) has a decent late run, and you have to respect the fact that he's exiting some tough graded-stakes races where he wasn't entirely disgraced. That said, a few of these have proven a bit better than him, so he'll need to show a bit more to get the W in here. GRADE: C.

#7 BRAN (FR) (5/1) has done his best work sprinting, but he's run decently going a mile, so don't worry about the distance. In fact, three back he won an upper-level allowance race here at Del Mar going a mile; and back in 2022, he ran a tough-luck third in this very same race at 3/1. I have a feeling that Sadler has been pointing to this spot, third off the bench and going sprint to route. There's a world in which he goes off favored. GRADE: A.

#8 AIR FORCE RED (8/1) has tactical speed, and he should be prominent early while exiting three sprint races. This old pro is battle-tested against some quality stakes horses, so he should make a good account of himself in here. He's a contender, but I prefer others a little more. GRADE: B.

#9 ALMENDARES (GB) (6/1) has a really nice stretch run, but this poor guy has been so unlucky in several close finishes. Last year, he was favored in this race, but he didn't have the most comfortable of trips, and he failed to fire—but then he showed up in his next start and almost won the Del Mar Mile (G2), so perhaps D'Amato is following the same pattern and this is just a prep for next time? Still, I think he's good enough to win with the right set-up. That said, I think he'll be shorter than 6/1. GRADE: A.

#10 ASTRONOMER (8/1) was ignored in this race last year, and he ran a very good second at 22/1. He got unlucky, as the winner ran one of the fastest miles of the meet that year. He ran a mixed bag of races after that until hitting the shelf in February. I have to think Callaghan is ready to give this race another go off the freshening. GRADE: A.

#11 ENDLESSLY (6/1) adds blinkers for the third start of his form cycle after two okay races against graded-stakes foes. He's always hinted at major talent—to the point where he ran in the Kentucky Derby (G1) despite not being a dirt horse—but he hasn't really come through with a big breakout race. That said, he's in good hands, and I don't think we've seen the best of him yet. Unfortunately, he'll have to work out a trip from out here. GRADE: B.

CONCLUSION

There are lots of places to land in here, but one thing is for certain: I'm fine letting Beyond Brilliant beat me. I'll let the tote decide my wagers, but based on the morning-line odds, #1 WATSONVILLE (20/1) is the best price. That said, I think #7 BRAN (FR) (5/1) is the most likely winner, while #9 ALMENDARES (GB) (6/1) and #10 ASTRONOMER (8/1) figure to be competitive as well, though I do expect the former to be a shorter price.

Visit www.frankscatoni.com for more content.

If you'd like to learn more about **OptixEQ**, visit www.optixeq.com.