

## **DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY**

**By Frank R. Scatoni**

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**Date:** 8/2/25

**Race 11:** Cal-bred \$20K optional-claiming/N1X contested at one mile on turf (rails at 12-ft.)

**Post:** approx. post 7:01 p.m. PDT

### **OVERVIEW**

Today's contest race is a doozy! The morning-line favorite, who I don't like at all, is a tepid 7/2. Plus, there's a lot of speed signed on in this Cal-bred \$20K optional-claiming/N1X contested at one mile on the lawn with the rails at 12-feet. I think this race has chaos written all over it, and I refuse to take a short price on anyone.

#1 WINNING PATRIOT (10/1), the first Gaines entrant, was last seen in May breaking his maiden in game fashion at Santa Anita. He's been freshened for his first try versus winners, and the breeding is here to suggest that this 4-year-old has plenty of upside. I wish he wasn't stuck at the rail because I have to think that Ricky is going to be aggressive to avoid getting buried, and there is a ton of early speed in here. If he somehow manages to suck back and just track a fast pace, he'll have every chance, but that might be wishful thinking. GRADE: B.

#2 PRINCE OF DEL MAR (20/1) doesn't look like much on paper, but he does have the best closing times out of anyone in the field, and I believe there's a really good chance that this race falls apart with so much speed. I also like that Mathis gave him a good public workout by running him in a 6.5-furlongs sprint at Los Al, where he showed tactical speed before tiring. He looks very sneaky to me. GRADE: A.

#3 SOGNO DI VINO (15/1) has tactical speed, so he should be sitting in a good spot not too far off the early pace, but he's yet to show the requisite oomph necessary to win a turf race. He had to move to Los Al to break his maiden last time, and that stalk and pounce style isn't as effective on the lawn. I suppose he could just run evenly and win by default when the speed backs up and the closers have too much to do, but I don't want to bet on that scenario. GRADE: X.

#4 CARDIFF CRACK (12/1) gets wiseguy consideration. He's versatile, and he knows how to sit off the pace and pass horses. He also comes into this with an old-school pattern, two sprints to a route, making the third start of his form cycle. Bill McLean can pop with a price on turf, and this guy will have the perfect pace set-up to give him every chance for the W. GRADE: A.

#5 CANANI (12/1) has yet to live up to his namesake, but he has some excuses. On paper, it might seem that he'll be too close to the fast early pace, but he does know how to rate a bit, and

if you look, you'll see that this guy's hand has been forced with inside posts, so he's had no choice but to go hard. Barocio has done a great job this year, and I have to think he'll have this guy ready to fire fresh off the layoff. GRADE: A.

#6 PRINCE DOLCE (8/1), the second Gaines runner, was overmatched last time in the Cecil B. DeMille (G3), so I won't hold his sixth-place finish against him. It was also his first route try after running in sprint races. I have no idea what this guy's true ability is around two turns, but hot-riding Fresu takes the call, so that piques my interest. Still, I'm tempted to watch one. GRADE: C.

#7 IT'S A FACTOR (20/1) is hard to get a bead on because his run style is pretty schizophrenic, but his recent races from off the pace haven't been any good, and his come-home times are nothing to write home about. He's also been double-digits in all of his starts at this level. GRADE: X.

#8 THREE GEORGES (15/1) has been on the lead in his two recent route races, and that trip won't get it done here with other speed in the race. Plus, he looks too slow on paper, so he'll need to show marked improvement to get the job done. GRADE: X.

#9 MINING DISTRICT (7/2) is your tepid morning-line favorite, and it has to be because of his solid recent Beyers, but those were on dirt, and it's hard to ignore his 0-for-2 record (with no placings) on turf. I'm completely against him, but I am concerned that Berrios takes the call, and Berrios is a difference-maker on turf. Still, I'm taking him on. No guts, no glory! GRADE: X.

#10 UNCLE CHILLY (5/1) is a stretch-out sprinter who flashed speed on dirt early in his career, so I have to think he'll be prominent early, especially since he'll have to go hard out of the gate to angle over for position. Puype is good on the stretch-out, so I'll give him a look, but 5/1 seems awfully short on a horse whose one win came in wire fashion on dirt. GRADE: C.

#11 CHROMEFLASH (8/1) is another stretch-out sprinter who will have to go from out here, and that should compromise his chances late. His last race was uncharacteristically bad, but if you look beyond that, you'll see that he ran some really competitive races while putting up solid speed figures—but all sprinting! My man Peter Thomas Fornatale gave this horse a shout, so I'll consider him, but he's not my pick. GRADE: C.

#12 MILES FINCH (4/1) has sprint speed and an outside post, so he's another who is going to have to just go for it and hope he can angle over and get position. The last time he routed, he made an easy lead and tired to finish third. That's probably why Sadler cut him back last time so he could break his maiden in a 6-furlong turf sprint. He faces winners for the first time, and that's never easy. It's good to see Hernandez on board, but 4/1 is a terrible price, in my opinion. GRADE: X.

#13 BRAZENLY (6/1) (AE) should be considered if he gets in. He's a total pro who grinds it out in every race, and that kind of style should come in handy against these. I know he hasn't won in a long time, but he's run fast enough to win at this level, and note that his last two races came against much tougher, and he was not disgraced at all. GRADE: B.

### **CONCLUSION**

I could be way off here, but I really have no use for the top few choices on the morning-line, so I'm expecting a whacky result, hence my selections! I think **#2 PRINCE OF DEL MAR (20/1)** will get the set-up of a lifetime; we'll find out if he's good enough. **#4 CARDIFF CRACK (12/1)** is sitting on a peak effort. **#5 CANANI (12/1)** is likely better than he's shown. I'm not sure what I'll do here, but it's nice to have all of these big-priced options!

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