

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

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Date: 8/16/25

Race 8: \$300K Del Mar Oaks (G1) for 3yo fillies going 9-furlongs on turf (rails at 12-feet)

Post: approx. post 5:33 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

It's the only Grade One turf race of the meet, the prestigious \$300K Del Mar Oaks (G1), a 9-furlong turf affair for 3-year-old fillies. Why the rails are at 12-feet is beyond my comprehension, but there you have it. Twelve horses are entered but only 11 will greet the starter (you know, because the rails are out!). But we have a really nice group of young ladies, and I'm excited to see how the incredibly talented Thought Process does against a Euro import and an East Coast invader.

#1 SLICK (IRE) (15/1), the first D'Amato entrant, came off a December layoff and ran a very good third against N1X foes here at Del Mar earlier in the meet. She had no pace to close into, yet she still showed good late energy to lose by only a half-length. That was at 8.5-furlongs, suggesting that today's 9-furlongs won't be an issue at all. Yes, she faces a major class test, but there is definitely some ability here. GRADE: C.

#2 TAKE A BREATH (GB) (12/1) has done good work on good-to-firm ground overseas, so it's no surprise that she shows up here right off the boat for Mark Glatt, running in a Grade One after just winning at Beverley (GB) on July 5. That might seem ambitious, but this ownership group has done this often, and they are very good with their new acquisitions. Turf guru Berrios shows up, so I have to think this horse is *hella* live, especially since Berrios just rode the fave Thought Process to a dominating victory last time. Hmmm. GRADE: A.

#3 VELOCITY (15/1) stretched out for the first time last time, and she was game in victory when nosing out one of today's foes. Granted, she did get the jump on Slick (Ire), who was a few lengths behind this gal through very slow early splits. I think Slick (Ire) can turn the tables on her, but both of them are facing more accomplished animals. GRADE: C.

#4 RESOLVE (20/1), the first Powell runner, still needs to clear her N1X, so she seems up against it today, especially since she's coming off a freshening after two blah races. I've backed her a few times in those allowance races, and she never did what I expected her to do. She needs a step forward, but perhaps Desormeaux can be a difference-maker, if you're a believer. Yes, this is a Scatoni-Off Angle Horse. GRADE: X.

#5 LUSH LIPS (GB) (3/1) invades from the East Coast, and she comes loaded for bear off a dominating win in the Tepin at Churchill Downs, where she showed that she could sit off the pace and power home to win convincingly. That tractability will come in handy, but she also has enough early speed to keep Thought Process honest. She's the deserving second choice, and it's nice to see Gaffalione out here for this Grade One. GRADE: A.

#6 EDGE OF MALI (IRE) (15/1) looked good breaking her maiden over this course opening weekend, but she did what she was supposed to do as the 6/5 favorite, and it's not like she came home particularly fast. Do note that she's owned by the same folks who just imported Take A Breath (GB). GRADE: X.

#7 WILD THEN (6/1) won three in a row before finishing behind Lush Lips in the Edgewood (G2) at Churchill Downs, and then she followed that up with a third-place finish in the San Clemente (G2) behind both Thought Process and Casalu, despite a ground-saving trip. In other words, she'll need to do a lot better today, but that's not out of the question because she was running on late last time despite having no pace to run at. GRADE: B.

#8 FIRENZE FLAVOR (15/1) has always had a nice closing kick, but she couldn't show that off last time against Thought Process because she didn't have a pace to close into. At least you know she can handle the distance after winning the Honeymoon (G3) at 9-furlongs two back. Still, she always seems to run the same race, and that race won't be fast enough to win this. GRADE: X.

#9 CASALU (10/1) has tactical speed, but Kimura chose not to use it last time to try and keep Thought Process honest, so they had to settle for second place. If she's going to win this, she'll need to be ridden more aggressively, so we'll see what Kimura decides to do. She's never been beyond a mile, so distance is a real question mark for a gal who has always looked like a miler. She's a nice horse, but I don't think she's good enough to chase down Thought Process, and I don't think she's good enough to fend off the stretch-runners if the big gal falters. GRADE: C.

#10 THOUGHT PROCESS (8/5), the second D'Amato runner, looked like a beast when she romped in the San Clemente (G2), beating several of these in facile fashion. Granted, she did take advantage of a slow early pace, but her tactical speed is her best asset, so she should get a great trip and set-up once again. She's never been beyond 8-furlongs, but the way she finished up last time makes me think that 9-furlongs won't be an issue. What I don't understand, however, is why win-rider Berrios ends up on the European import? GRADE: A.

#11 MISO PHANSY (30/1), the second Powell entrant, did fine work against Cal-breds before trying open company in the Honeymoon (G3), and she did not disappoint, finishing second, losing by a dirty nose. She finished up nicely in that 9-furlong affair, but she took no money in the San Clemente (G2) last time, and she was flat. She'll need a big step forward today. GRADE: X.

#12 STRIVER (30/1) (AE) is still a maiden, so perhaps it's best that she's on the outside looking in. She's never been beyond 5-furlongs before, so this is a curious spot for her first two-turn try.
GRADE: X.

CONCLUSION

#10 THOUGHT PROCSS (8/5) is the real deal, but she will be shorter than 8/5, and she'll have to show that she can handle today's distance. She should win anyway, but she does us no favors in the contest, nor does the logical second choice, **#5 LUSH LIPS (GB) (3/1)**. The play is probably **#2 TAKE A BREATH (GB) (12/1)** for a few reasons: she was purchased by shrewd owners who clearly bought her to run in this race; and why does Berrios end up here when he just won with Thought Process? That's enough for me to take a flyer.

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