

## DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

X: [Frank R. Scatoni \(@ScatoniSureShot\) / X](#)

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**Date:** 9/6/25

**Race 9:** \$250K John C. Mabee (G2) for fillies & mares going 9-furlongs on turf (rail at 0-ft.)

**Post:** approx. post 5:38 p.m. PDT

### OVERVIEW

We are getting down to the wire here, but thankfully, there are two online contest races to choose from today, and one of them is the \$250K John C. Mabee (G2), a 9-furlong turf affair for fillies and mares with the rails at zero-feet. There is no pace on paper, but Phil D'Amato has four entered, and I have to think that one of them will be on pace duty today. At least the rails are at zero-feet, so the closers will have a fighting chance. Will race shape or class prevail?

#1 MAHINA (12/1) is a very honest gal who always shows up with her race, but so far, that race hasn't been good enough to win a graded-stakes event. I don't like that Berrios bails, or the fact that this gal is 0-for-6 here at Del Mar. She seems a little more tactical than some of these, so perhaps if Van Dyke puts her in the race early and saves ground, maybe she can hang on for a small slice—but I'm not betting on that. GRADE: X.

#2 PUBLIC ASSEMBLY (6/1), the first of four D'Amato runners, is a Grade Three winner at a mile, but she has a win at 10-furlongs, so today's 9-panels won't be an issue, so don't hold her blah race in the Gamely (G1) at today's distance against her—that was a Grade One! She came off a freshening last time to run an okay second in the Yellow Ribbon (G2), grinding away and passing horses late despite a very slow pace. I think she can really build off that, and I'm expecting this 4-year-old to run a career-best. Will that be good enough? Fresu stays put. GRADE: B.

#3 MISSION OF JOY (12/1), the second D'Amato, faced some tough cookies back East when she was trained by Graham Motion, and you can't ignore the fact that she was a half-length away from winning a Grade One at Saratoga back in 2024. That said, her 2025 form pales in comparison to her early-season form last year. D'Amato showed confidence by running her in the Yellow Ribbon (G2) in her first start for him, but she didn't exactly wow at 10/1, stalking a slow pace and tiring. She's tough to support based on that race, but it's very interesting to see Berrios take the call, and he has done excellent work with D'Amato horses. If she runs back to her best form, she'll be in the frame...but that's a big if. GRADE: C.

**#4 MEDORO (5/2)** has always been a favorite of mine, so I was thrilled to see her come back off a December layoff and absolutely dominate in her 4-year-old debut in the restricted one-mile Osunitas earlier in the meet. She beat a really nice Cal-bred, who won for fun in her next race, so that had to be a useful prep for a gal who has such good 3-year-old foundation to build upon. Of course, this is a much tougher race, but this lightly raced 4-year-old still has plenty of room for improvement, and Eurton has been having a quietly good meet. Plus, she's a lot more tactical than some of the deep closers she has to face today. GRADE: A.

**#5 HOPEFUL (GB) (8/1)** looked good in her U.S. debut, beating nine other N1X types going a mile at Santa Anita...and doing it from the 10-hole. She had some traffic in her N2X race here at Del Mar, when she was sent off as the 8/5 favorite and could only manage sixth in a race that had a blanket finish for the top few spots. I think she's better than that, and the added ground will likely help her cause, but Fresu bails, and Baltic Fire, the 57/1 shot who beat her last time, is in here today. I think she'll run well, but can this 5-year-old mare show enough improvement to beat proven stakes foes? I'm not so sure. GRADE: X.

**#6 KENTUCKY GAL (IRE) (12/1)**, the third D'Amato, has tactical speed and adds blinkers, so I have to think she'll be the sacrificial lamb in here, setting the pace for her stablemates with the aggressive Maldonado in the irons. That said, she's coming out of longer races, and it's not like she has sharp early speed—she's still pretty slow! Is there a world in which she makes the lead, sets a slow pace, and just stays on, coming out of an 11-furlong affair? Stranger things have happened, but I'm betting that someone will run her down—but there is a world in which she hangs on for a small piece. GRADE: X.

**#7 GIMME A NOTHER (SAF) (3/1)** was a beast at Turffontein in her native South Africa, but she's still searching for her first U.S. victory. Unfortunately for her, she's been running against some quality ladies back East, and that's the main reason why she hasn't won yet. Graham Motion is no dummy, which is why he sends her out here to shake things up against horses who aren't She Feels Pretty. GRADE: A.

**#8 BALTIC FIRE (12/1)** owes me nothing after I gave her out on-air during our “Double Trouble Live” show on July 31. All she did was go on and win at 57/1. That was a rough race, and there were five on the wire in a mosh pit. She prevailed, running a career-best, but that was an N2X, and this is a much tougher spot. I'll be rooting for jockey Serafin Carmona, who was kind enough to punk my “Double Trouble Live” cohort, Ciaran Thornton, in an Insta video a few weeks ago, but I'm not seeing a W today. GRADE: X.

**#9 HANG THE MOON (5/1)**, the final D'Amato, won this race last year at 20/1, and she beat some nice ladies in the process. She followed that up with an even better victory in the Rodeo Drive (G2) a month later, so there is quality here. Last time, she came off a December layoff and just basically ran around the track in the Yellow Ribbon (G2) at 5/1. She ran like a short horse, so I'm expecting her to do much better today, second off the bench and with this race as her target (since D'Amato likes to point good horses to certain races). She's a strong contender, but

she'll need some help on the front end, since her best work is when she's able to lay way off the pace and come flying late. GRADE: B.

### **CONCLUSION**

I think it's going to be one of the top two, but I'll give **#7 GIMME A NOTHER (SAF) (3/1)** a slight nod over **#4 MEDORO (5/2)**, since the former is coming out of much tougher races. If you're looking for an alternative, **#2 PUBLIC ASSEMBLY (6/1)** could surprise at a decent price, but she'll need a career-best, and I think 6/1 is too short; I'd make her value line 10/1. Of course, **#9 HANG THE MOON (5/1)** is a logical alternative to all of the above, but I'm expecting her to be a little shorter than her morning-line.

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**Date:** 9/6/25

**Race 11:** \$50K optional-claiming/N1X for fillies & mares going 8-furlongs on turf (rail at 0-ft.)

**Post:** approx. post 6:38 p.m. PDT

### OVERVIEW

Let's play two! That's right, you have a second contest race to choose from (in addition to Race 9, the John C. Mabee [G2]), and that's today's nightcap, a \$50K optional-claiming/N1X for fillies and mares going 8-furlongs on turf with the rails at zero-feet. I thought this was a very tough race because most of these ladies are trying to prove they are proper allowance horses after beating up on cheaper company.

**#1 BEETS (12/1)** looks like a "proper" allowance horse, simply because she has yet to run for a tag or against weaker company, like most of these. Unfortunately, her N1X form back East is not pretty. She now shows up here off an October layoff for new trainer Michael McCarthy, who typically gives them a spin or two before they show their best stuff. That said, I do like that Ricky is riding, because the best race this horse ever ran came on the lead going a mile, so I'm expecting similar aggressive tactics today. Will she be fit enough? There are no world-beaters in here. GRADE: A.

**#2 YELLOW SUN DRESS (12/1)** did well against weaker starter foes while sprinting; now she's being asked to go two turns for the first time while facing N1X types. That's a tough ask, but this lightly raced 4-year-old is in good hands with Glatt, who excels on the stretch-out move, and I thought this gal ran sneaky-good last time in a turf sprint at this level. She finished up nicely with no pace to run at, and she galloped out well against allowance horses. She is not my typical kind of play in races at this level, but she catches a weak group, and there is some upside here after that last race. GRADE: A.

**#3 GRECIAN GODDESS (12/1)** is a proper allowance horse who has held her own against some solid runners. I know she's whiffed three times at this level, but I can assure you that those last two races at this level were much tougher. I like that she shortens up a smidge and that the blinkers come back off. Cerin has been ice-cold for a while, but he's still a good trainer, and I can see this one outrunning her odds. GRADE: B.

#4 MOTET (30/1) tried to wire them at this level last time, but she was overtaken late to finish fourth. That was a good strategy for a gal who broke her maiden in a sprint against \$50K types. She might try it again, and she's lucky that this is a weaker group, but with the rails at zero, a wire job is unlikely. GRADE: X.

#5 STARTS NOW (10/1), the first Baltas entrant, is coming off an April layoff after running a good second against N1X foes while going 10-furlongs, which was too far for her. This is a much better distance for a gal who does have tactical speed and figures to trip out nicely. She too made her bones against starter foes, so she has to prove it in the allowance ranks, but at least she showed she could be competitive at this level. I have to think she'll be very prominent early with Maldonado taking the call. GRADE: B.

#6 DELIGHTFUL LAURA (12/1) used her speed and a five-pound weight-break to destroy \$62.5K maidens last time. Obviously, this is a tough spot, facing winners for the first time off a wire job, so she seems up against it, especially since there should be a few others at least attending the pace. That said, there are two positives: first off, she set really fast fractions in that race last time and never quit (yes, she slowed to a crawl at the end, but the race was already won). Secondly, top turf rider Berrios takes the call, and that really surprises me, because on paper, I give this gal no chance. GRADE: C.

#7 **WORD PLAY (3/1)** is in very good form right now, but she's been facing starter foes, and this is a much tougher level. Lucky for her, however, this race is lacking proper allowance types! Granted, she does have okay form at this level from earlier in the year, so she's a solid and obvious fit against this very suspect group. She also figures to trip out, getting the perfect stalking trip behind the pacesetters, and that means she'll get first jump on the closers. GRADE: A.

#8 **RUBY CANTU (30/1)** was 46/1 at this level last time in an 11-furlong race, and she ran to those long odds, finishing sixth. That had to be a conditioning race, since that was her first start for Capestro after a mixed bag of races at varying levels at Lone Star. She doesn't look fast enough, but Capestro is no dummy, so if she thinks this gal belongs at this level, then I'm going to believe her, especially since this race is filled with starter and claiming types. If you need a 30/1 shot, she's not impossible, especially after that last race. GRADE: A.

#9 SWEET DELTA DAWN (8/1), the second Baltas, broke her maiden here last year, but then she hit the shelf. Baltas is so good off long layoffs, but this gal likes to be in a stalking position, so it's possible she's looking at a wide journey, which is not the winning trip. She also needs to jump up in the speed-figure department, which isn't impossible for a horse making her 4-year-old debut. I'm tempted to watch one. GRADE: C.

#10 TRANSCENDING (IRE) (6/1) lost all chance at the start last time when coming off a year layoff to face fellow 3-year-olds in a 5-furlong turf sprint. Of course, I can forgive that race (especially since there was a spill), but now she has to face older foes, stretch out, and work out a

trip from the 10-hole. At least she's never been for sale, so there has to be more here than meets the eye—but this seems like a tough spot. GRADE: C.

#11 SKATINGTHROUGHLIFE (8/1), the second Glatt entrant, looked good breaking her maiden in a 6-furlong turf sprint at Santa Anita back in December. She hasn't been seen since. Glatt is good off the layoff, but I have to think he's going to give this gal a spin in her first try going two turns and coming off such a long break. GRADE: C.

#12 THEBESTISYETTOBE (IRE) (4/1), the second D'Amato entrant, was beating up on lesser foes when she came off a freshening and almost got a win at this N1X level. She finished well, despite traffic, and just missed by a half-length. It was a career-best for her, so seemingly, she's a good fit at this allowance level. But here's the thing: that race came going 11-furlongs, and she needed every bit of that distance to make it a race. Secondly, she was way off a very fast pace, so perhaps that late run was flattered by the race shape. The post is no picnic here, and I don't like that D'Amato risked her for \$25K back in May, so the wheels could fall off at any minute—so demand value. GRADE: B.

#13 ESMERAY (IRE) (20/1) (AE) has okay form in the N1X ranks, but she's also had her chances, to no avail. I can see her just angling over and hoping for the best, and that's not something I want to bet on—but she could certainly spice up the exotics. GRADE: X.

#14 OVER ATTRACTED (8/1) (AE) is an 8-year-old mare who shows no signs of slowing down, so hats off to her. That said, she's coming off a June freshening and trying something she hasn't done since July 2023, and that's going two turns on the turf. All of her recent form has come sprinting, so this seems like a tough ask. GRADE: X.

## **CONCLUSION**

This race is impossible. There are so many places to land, so don't take too short of a price. **#7 WORD PLAY (GB) (3/1)** looks like the most likely winner, but she's had her chances at this level without much success. **#1 BEETS (12/1)** has been facing tougher allowance foes back East, but the layoff is a bit of a concern. **#2 YELLOW SUN DRESS (12/1)** has class and distance questions to answer. And **#8 RUBY CANTU (30/1)** has to prove she belongs on this circuit. In other words, you can poke holes in every one of these horses. Play the board, maybe spread a little bit, and hope for the best.

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