

## DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

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**Date:** 11/23/25

**Race 7:** \$100K Red Carpet (G3) for fillies & mares going 11-furlongs on turf (rails at 12-feet)

**Approx. Post:** 3:32 p.m. PST

### OVERVIEW

What a fine rendition of the \$100K Red Carpet (G3), an 11-furlong turf affair for fillies and mares with the rails set at 12-feet. We've got last year's champ back to defend her title, but trainer Phil D'Amato comes to the party with a three-headed monster. There are some nice ladies in here, but ultimately, this is going to be a jock's race since there is not much speed on paper, so we'll see how the early race shape unfolds.

Note that this is the start of the \$3 Late Pick 3, so Ciaran and I will go live with our "Double Trouble Live" show to cover this sequence, as well as the \$5 Late Double. Join us at 3:10 p.m./PST on our YouTube channel [here](#). PLEASE LIKE AND SUBSCRIBE (it's free!)...you'll thank me later!

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#1 MAHINA (20/1) has run some competitive races, including a nose defeat to today's morning-line favorite, Mrs. Astor, back in June at Santa Anita in the 10-furlong Possibly Perfect, so a repeat of that form would give her a chance—but that race looks like an outlier on her form, and it's hard to see her stepping up today and running a big one over a course where she's failed to even hit the board in seven tries. GRADE: X.

**#2 MRS. ASTOR (5/2)**, the first Jonathan Thomas entrant, won this race last year in impressive fashion at a very good price of 9/2. She won't be that good of a number today while trying to defend her title, even though her last race could be considered uncharacteristically flat. I'll forgive it though, because she stalked a glacial pace and never had a chance to make up ground on the loose winner. Also, she was carrying more weight than her foes in that race, while today, she actually gets a few pounds from one of the other contenders. She'll have every chance to make amends today. GRADE: A.

#3 HEY JESSIE (15/1) rewarded my faith in her last time when she beat open N1X foes in a 10-furlong turf affair at Santa Anita at nearly 5/1. I liked her that day because this Cal-bred has always exhibited a strong late run, and that was the first time she was getting so much added ground. She gets even more ground today, so I'm curious to see how she fares with those strong

finishing times, but there are some really nice ladies in here, and I'm not sure this 3-year-old is quite up to the task today. GRADE: X.

#4 WILL THEN (4/1), the second Jonathan Thomas runner, is a 3-year-old who looks a cut below the older runners in here, but she definitely has some quality to her while also still having a lot of room for improvement. That said, she is facing elders for the first time, and 11-furlongs is a question-mark for a gal who lacked punch going 9-furlongs two back. I'm not saying she's a rabbit in here, but I have to think she's going to be forwardly placed in a pace-less race, and if others join her, that will set things up nicely for her stablemate. GRADE: C.

#5 PUBLIC ASSEMBLY (5/1), the first D'Amato charge, has run a mixed bag of races this year, but she's been keeping some pretty good company, so she has the class to be competitive in here. But the biggest thing for this gal in her favor is the distance. She hasn't gone beyond 10-furlongs since coming to SoCal, and if you look at her sharp maiden-breaker back East, you'll see that she relished 10.5-furlongs at Kentucky Downs, so seemingly this is the race she's meant to win. She'll also get a good stalking trip, thus getting first jump on the late runners. GRADE: B.

#6 PARADISE LAKE (8/1) has yet to face stakes foes, but she has the come-home times to be competitive against this group, assuming she can take a step forward, second off the bench after a sharp win against N2X foes going 9-furlongs at Santa Anita. My concern, however, is that the distance might be a smidge too far. Back in March, she had the lead in a 10-furlong affair, but she flattened out late and lost to Public Assembly. Maybe for underneath. GRADE: C.

#7 SUN OF HILL (BRZ) (20/1), the second D'Amato trainee, has frustrated me countless times. I've backed her at some really good prices, thinking she'd finally get up based on her solid come-home times, but she just hasn't been able to get the job done, despite running some pretty big races. The most frustrating thing, however, is that the two times she raced at today's distance, she showed zero punch late, despite her nice stretch runs going shorter. I'm off her today, so she better not win! GRADE: X.

#8 CORNELIA FORT (15/1) is a cool Cal-bred to own because she always shows up and runs her race, but that often means she's settling for the minor awards. She just lost to Hey Jessie on the square, and now she has to face even tougher foes. I can't support, but at least you know she'll get a good forwardly placed trip in a race with no pace on paper. GRADE: X.

#9 VENGANZA (8/1) looks a cut below the best in here, lacking the needed punch to get a win against graded-stakes company. I actually liked her a bit two back in the CTT&TOB at today's distance, and she was never involved at 26/1. That said, Demuro never really gave her a chance, as he completely misjudged the glacial pace and had her way too far back in a race won in wire fashion. I won't hold that against her, however, because Demuro was just flat-out awful all summer long, as he tried to adapt to U.S. racing. Well, he's finally adapted, and he's having a terrific meet, winning at a 45 percent clip, so that makes me want to really consider this gal again—but is this really the right distance for her? I trust Mandella, but this gal's last win was at

6.5-furlongs down the hill, and last time, she was outfinished going a mile against weaker foes. Paper handicapping makes me want to toss her, but my gut says I shouldn't sell her too short if Mandella is giving her another shot going this far. GRADE: B.

#10 MUSICAL RHAPSODY (IRE) (5/1), the third and final D'Amato, ran a tough-luck second in this race way back in 2023 at 18/1—then she found the winner's circle a few months later in a 10-furlong allowance race and a 12-furlong overnight-stakes race, so she likes stretching her legs. That said, she was 8/1 in the 11-furlong CTT&TOB back in 2024, and she ran a middling third. Her 2025 form since then has not been good, and that's a concern. I'm sure D'Amato wouldn't run her if he didn't think she belonged, but this 6-year-old mare needs to turn back the clock, and 5/1 seems awfully short for me to bet on that. GRADE: C.

### **CONCLUSION**

I wish I had something more clever, but I think #2 **MRS. ASTOR (5/2)** is the one to beat and a deserving favorite in here, even though she'll have to slay the three-headed D'Amato monster. If you want a wiseguy play, #9 **VENGANZA (8/1)** is interesting only because she looks like a toss on paper, yet Mandella bothers to run her here, and her jock is just too hot to ignore.

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