

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

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Date: 11/28/25

Race 7: \$200K Hollywood Turf Cup (G2) contested at 12-furlongs on the lawn (rails at 24-ft.)

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

OVERVIEW

It's closing weekend of the Bing meet here at Del Mar, but that means plenty of excellent turf racing to sink our teeth into. Today's contest race on this 9-race Friday card is the \$200K Hollywood Turf Cup (G2), a 12-furlong turf affair with the rails at 24-feet. Last year's winner is back to defend his title, and he looks pretty good to me.

Note that this race is the start of the low-takeout \$3 Late P3, so please support this wager. It's not part of today's "Double Trouble Live" show, but Ciaran and I will be live at 3:40 p.m./PST to tackle the \$5 Late Double (R8/R9) in real-time. You can LIKE AND SUBSCRIBE...and watch [here](#).

#1 BALLADEER (12/1) has danced a lot of dances, so hats off to him, but it's been a long time since he was a major threat in a race like this. There are two things to consider, however: he does have the speed to dictate the pace; and his trainer is all out to win the training title this meet. Still, I have to think someone is going to run him down. GRADE: X.

#2 FLASHIEST (15/1), the first Powell runner, is a cool 7-year-old who ran a pretty good second last time at 15/1 in an 11-furlong N2X AOC over this course. That's the good news. The bad news is that he was no match at all for the horse who won that race, and he now has to face him again. GRADE: X.

#3 RASTAMAN VIBE (8/1) has been a very popular claim-box item of late, so that must mean this 4-year-old ridgeling is happy and healthy—and it's a big endorsement that Hernandez keeps riding through the claim. He also loves Del Mar, so don't be discouraged by his lousy Santa Anita races. That said, this is a significant class test for him, so if he wins, I lose. GRADE: X.

#4 NINEELEVENTURBO (6/1) ran a solid third in this race last year at 12/1, but he was no match for the top two, and he's going to have to face them again today. I respect the fact that this 8-year-old still has some run in him, and I know that he'll appreciate the added ground, since he always comes running on through the lane, but I think he's better suited to underneath. GRADE: X.

#5 GROGU (8/1), the second Powell entrant, looked very good last time when easily beating N1X foes going 10-furlongs in just his second start for Powell. Clearly, the longer the better for this 4-year-old, who still has room to improve, so we'll see how he stands the class raise today. As much as I respect Powell, I do think this is ambitious placing. I'll watch one. GRADE: X.

#6 REIQUIST (10/1) is a hard-knocking 5-year-old, but he's an upper-level allowance type for a reason. Two back, he was pasted in a Grade 2, so I'm not sure why today would be much different. Last time, he was right there against a few of these going 11-furlongs here at Del Mar, but he was out-finished. GRADE: X.

#7 **TRULY QUALITY (5/2)** won this race last year, and I have to think that Thomas has been pointing for a repeat, since he's been very careful getting him to this race. He ran a pretty good fourth over the summer in the Del Mar Handicap (G2), coming on late in a shorter event. That was a much tougher group, so I'm expecting this guy to be very tough today. One thing concerns me, however: blinkers off. Hmmm. GRADE: A.

#8 **BALNIKHOF (IRE) (4/1)** was only a half-length away from winning this race last year, and his tune-up last time off a three-month layoff, when he looked really good smoking N2X AOC foes, should have him in prime form for this. Can he turn the tables on Truly Quality? Maybe. GRADE: A.

#9 **MONDEGO (5/1)** is the value play, assuming the 5/1 line holds. This horse has some ridiculously fast come-home times, yet he's never been this far, so I have to think he's going to relish the extra ground today. He's yet to win a graded-stakes race, but he was not disgraced in either of his two Grade 2 tries. My biggest concern isn't the horse, it's the jock. Kimura will have to make sure he's not too far back, and he'll have to outfinish some stronger jocks in this marathon race. Still, 5/1 is a very good price. GRADE: A.

CONCLUSION

I would be very surprised if one of #7 **TRULY QUALITY (5/2)**, #8 **BALNIKHOF (IRE) (4/1)**, or #9 **MONDEGO (GB) (5/1)** didn't win this race. I'd also be surprised if any one of these morning-lines held. Still, I do think #9 **MONDEGO (GB) (5/1)** will be the longest priced of the three, making him the value of the race, even though I fully expect #7 **TRULY QUALITY (5/2)** to run well enough to defend his title. If you want to go nuts, #1 **BALLADEER (12/1)** has a pace advantage and should be a bomb.

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