

# Del Mar Bottom Line

*By John Lies*



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Saturday, August 22

## RACE ONE

**#4 DREAM TEAM** kicks off his racing career today while cut out to be a good one. He cost one million dollars at auction as a yearling. There are three stakes winners to speak of amongst his six winning siblings. His morning worktab is littered with bullet drills.

**#2 SKELTON PASS** finished an encouraging second in his debut in a fast race for the level. He got claimed that afternoon by his current trainer who is winning at a high percentage here this meet. It looks like they may have reached in for a smart purchase.

**#6 COLONIAL POWER** improved dramatically in his second and most recent start to lose only by a head after pushing the pace from start to finish. Today he picks up one of the best and leading riders here at Del Mar. His outside post position should only help.

## RACE TWO

**#5 I DON'T CARE WHO** finished a distant third at this level over a sloppy track here opening weekend. His best races have come over a fast track. He is reunited with the excellent rider who won on him a few starts back. His best is strong enough to beat these.

**#9 KNOCK EM FLAT** has won three of five this year and never looked back winning in the slop here last out. He has also been claimed three times in a row. He was entered and scratched out of a turf event here Thursday and seems like a better fit in this spot today.

**#8 SEA PREACHER** could be dangerous at a bit of a price. Perhaps his best lifetime win came in his only start on a dirt track last summer. He is not subjected to the claiming price of this race because he has been away six months. He typically goes to the front.

### **RACE THREE**

**#3 AIR POCKET** is knocking on the door for a win. He has been second or third in four straight races now and did well in the slop in a race originally scheduled for the turf course. He moves back to the grass today and has tactical speed to get position early.

**#5 DYLAN WARD** has burned some money but probably needed his last race. It was his first start both since last fall and for his current trainer. Today he will be equipped with blinkers and switches to a rider known for getting early speed out of his mounts.

**#4 CHROMIUM** is the longshot threat. He showed some run in his only start here on the main track before coming up short. He is bred top and bottom to excel on turf and could take a big step forward today. His rider won a race for this trainer here last weekend.

### **RACE FOUR**

**#2 APPEALING TALE** may hold a pace advantage in this competitive graded stakes event. He figures to be in front of his main competition early in the race and seems best at distances like this up to a mile. This short field may go a bit slow early for the distance.

**#3 WILD DUDE** delivered on his promise and won a Grade I stakes race here last out with a career best effort. The extra furlong of this race should not pose a problem for him. The main concern is whether or not this late-running sprinter gets a real pace to run at.

**#5 KOBE'S BACK** is at his best over today's elongated sprint distance of seven furlongs. He too has a deep closing style for a sprinter that may be compromised by the shape of this race. He finished a useful third last out going one furlong shorter than today.

### **RACE FIVE**

**#2 PERFECT SET** ran too well to lose last out at this level. He is obviously thriving in the care of his current trainer who has gotten a win and two good seconds out of him in as many starts since claimed. He lost by a nose last out and had a spot of trouble in the race.

**#7 GRAZEN SKY** has never finished out of the money in nine lifetime starts. Today he adds blinkers for the first time. This three-year-old California-bred stakes winner has yet to defeat older horses but should do so eventually. He seems to fit well with this group.

**#8 LUCKBOX SAM** could be live at a square price. He switches back to a rider who has won on him before and put him on the lead that day. He seems to need to get out towards the front early to deliver his best performance. Don't be surprised if he perks up today.

## **RACE SIX**

**#10 TWENTYTWENTYVISION** is developing into a nice grass horse. His Hall of Fame trainer stepped him up into a top class turf event last out and ran a good second at generous odds. He missed by only a nose at this same allowance level two starts back.

**#5 PROCUREMENT** has not won in some time but was laid off more than a year prior to his last race. The stakes winner on turf always showed a touch of class and probably needed that last out. Three horses have since returned to win right back out of that race.

**#9 PLAY HARD TO GET** ran particularly well for a sixth-place finisher in a nine-horse field last out. That is because he rallied extremely wide on a course with the rails way out while against the grain in a race where the leaders did not back up, plus he steadied early.

## **RACE SEVEN**

**#1 TIZ A TOMMY TOWN** has been second in both of her starts to date. One of those came over this track last out when she ran into a potential star who won impressively. The rail post is usually a concern in a sprint race. His trainer and rider inspire confidence.

**#7 ANNIE'S CURLS** could improve off her fourth-place effort first out. One reason is because her trainer wins with a healthy number of second-time starters, more so than his debut runners. She also adds blinkers today and retains an excellent rider in the saddle.

**#10 CASINO CALL** should not be overlooked at a price. This debutante drew a favorable outside post with a win-early pedigree for a win-early trainer. Her jockey is new to Del Mar this summer but seen his business pick up here the last couple weeks.

## **RACE EIGHT**

**#2 GANESH** may be ready to win an important race like this here in the United States. Many South American imports need a few starts to become acclimatized. He finished a close second in a turf marathon at this level last out while showing further progress.

**#4 BIG JOHN B** is the defending champion in this event. He has raced only three times this year but won his last two including one on the main track here last out. He is even better on turf and has now won thirteen races in his career. He is an obvious threat.

**#9 DANAS BEST** was a seven-time turf winner in Australia and could be the sleeper in this handicap under a somewhat light assignment. That could make a difference in a marathon race like this. His U.S. debut was useful enough and he looks like a true stayer.

## **RACE NINE**

**#3 BAYERN** is the Breeders' Cup Classic champion of last year. His first two outs this year were bad but he perked up and ran third here in a prep for this race. That could indicate he is rounding back into form and fitness. We know he can handle this distance.

**#5 RED VINE** will probably do very well in this race, the toughest of his career so far. He has excelled since switched to main track races over the winter. The Eastern shipper hails from a barn that has won Grade I races here before. His sire won this very race.

**#9 BEHOLDER** attempts to become the first female to win Del Mar's signature event. None has done it before though she probably has the best chance going in of any that has tried. This dual Eclipse champion has never tackled males or this distance before today.

## **RACE TEN**

**#8 ROY H** was much the best in his last race but had to settle for second. He had a terrible start and couldn't quite overcome that trouble. The winner of that race came right to win here Thursday. He has only raced three times but might just be the best in here.

**#2 MAL VERDE** has not started since January. His trainer is enjoying a high strike rate here at Del Mar this season but has not been winning with comebackers like this one over this year. This particular animal has shown he can fire fresh and be tough in turf sprints.

**#7 LABOUR** had to work hard to pick up third money last out but did so over this course from far off the pace. He won four turf races in his native Argentina and has only started three times in this country. His Hall of Fame rider is one of the very best in turf races.

## **RACE ELEVEN**

**#2 UNFETTERED** may be a good longshot play to close out the card. Note that his listed lifetime record does not factor in important winning experience in races that included Quarter Horses. He is plenty fast and races for a nice bonus of purse money.

**#7 BUCKLEBERRY GREY** returned to the races this year as a five-year-old and looked like a new horse. He first rattled off three straight wins before finishing a good second over this tack last out against similar rivals. His trainer is right atop the standings.

**#3 OLIGARCH** is a solid fit at this level. He could be forgiven for throwing in the towel last out because he raced along a deeper rail on a day that closers were winning with wide rallies from off the pace. That however depends on how much one believes in track bias.