

Del Mar Bottom Line

By John Lies



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RACE ONE

#4 DIABLO CABALLERO is due to catch a break. It took him ten tries to win a race for the first time only to be disqualified for drifting in. He had lost a couple of tough photo finishes earlier in his career as well. He has the ability to beat this similar field.

#6 COOL GREEN was the beneficiary of the top pick being disqualified in that same race last out and got moved up to second place. He has only raced twice in his career and did show improvement in that last start. Today he goes from the rail to the outside post.

#5 OTTO'S ECHO seems the most likely threat to these rivals that faced each other last out in that same event. He did show ability in two starts over a year ago and now returns as a five-year-old maiden coming six in about a month. It looks like he has trained well.

RACE TWO

#2 VANLOSE STAIRWAY won first off the claim for a shrewd outfit over this course last out. She fits well at this claiming level and retains the same excellent rider who is fresh out of the penalty box. This is a good distance for her and she drew a good post.

#4 WITH A TWIST is an obvious fit. The mare has notched eight lifetime wins on the turf including two of her last three and her most recent start here three weeks ago. She has also been claimed in three of her last four and was reclaimed by her current trainer.

#3 BOTTLE BLONDE can threaten at a price if she bounces back to her best form. She won a turf race much like this one here in early September at generous odds. Her last two races came at a tough allowance level and one was on the main track. Don't ignore her.

RACE THREE

#7 WISE TALE is taking a substantial drop in class. He not only plummets from maiden special weights to bottom level claimers but was facing a particularly promising juvenile in his last out. His sprint race over this track was solid and he has speed to get position.

#1 PURRIN' PROUD is going two turns for the first time. He should do well over the distance given his pedigree and the way he finished up sprinting in his last start here this month. The same top rider sticks with him and he drew well at this distance with speed.

#4 START A RUNNIN has raced four times and also tries a route of ground for the first time today much like the second pick. His best races came up on the pace and his connections may intend to go to the front today with an apprentice rider signed on.

RACE FOUR

#11 IT IS LIVING WATER proved he can run this far winning over this distance first off the claim last out. He is clearly doing well and thrives on turf. The fact he is entered for the optional claiming price means he won't lose this allowance condition if he wins.

#5 UNUSUALLY GREEN will be charging late. He consistently runs fast enough and well enough to win at this level but usually settles for second. He did win a race restricted to state-breds here in August but has been the runner-up in four of his last six races.

#3 NAHEM usually finishes in the money. The seven-year-old gelding is a turf pro with five of his eight lifetime wins having come over the lawn. He has finished third after showing speed in his last two when introduced to longer distances like the one today.

RACE FIVE

#6 CRUCERO has the edge over his main rivals today because of the distance. He is a true stayer that wants all of a mile and a quarter. His second-place effort at this level on turf last out was a good sign as he bounced back from poor efforts. He can win on dirt.

#4 IKE WALKER has gotten good since shipping west this summer. He woke up when sent two turns and has been first or second in his last four starts with consistently strong efforts. He could be the kind of horse that will run this far but has not done it before.

#1 PERFECT SET has proven to be an outstanding claim by one of the best in the business in that regard. He has raced six times for his current connections with three wins and three seconds that garnered significant earnings. The distance is still a question mark.

RACE SIX

#10 DRESSED IN HERMES looks like the one to fear most in this deep field. He looked stylish winning from off the pace two back while breaking his maiden in a one-mile turf stakes. He fared well against some of the best at the Breeders' Cup last out.

#11 IMPERIOUS ONE is an import worth considering. His connections are becoming known for success with these young overseas acquisitions at Del Mar. They just unveiled another dandy here last weekend. The odds may tell us what kind of runner this one is.

#1 MANHATTAN DAN insures a lively tempo. He likes to get out and set the pace and is graded stakes-placed on turf in Canada. He has not raced on a firm turf course since he broke his maiden sprinting at Saratoga this summer. Don't assume he'll just pack it in.

RACE SEVEN

#5 HOFFENHEIM exits a key race. His third-place effort in his only start came in a field that included a super impressive next-out winner. The winner of that event also came back with a strong second in stakes company. The extra furlong should only help.

#4 HARD GALE has a license to come out running. This barn continues to click and has great success when looking to this leading rider. He is bred to win early and has logged some morning drills at Santa Anita after getting legged up at a nearby training facility.

#3 LORD WALTON is worth a second look. His trainer is too good overall and especially with first-time starters to just dismiss this one with the presence of this rider. He may not have cost much as a yearling but the tote board should offer some clues.

RACE EIGHT

#9 FILIMBI might be the right mare in this deep field to take this Grade I event. She is based primarily in the East but already has shipped to California and won a graded stakes event on firm turf. Her rider got to know her last time and makes the trip out to ride her.

#1 HARD NOT TO LIKE is a multiple Grade I winner on turf of over \$1.2-million. Her rider is not only one of the very best but has won on her the last three times he has ridden her including two back. She has won going a mile but is cutting back in distance today.

#14 SHE'S NOT HERE won both of her starts over this course this summer including a Grade II. Her last race over soft ground is a throw out and she is sure to appreciate this firm course underneath her today. Her test is this level of competition and the poor post.

RACE NINE

#11 MINER'S LIGHT should be respected off his one and only start here this summer. He made a pronounced sweep to the front before getting beat a nose. That horse has gone on to become a serious stakes winner and there were other good ones behind that day.

#3 MIGHTY MOSES has the benefit of a good recent race over the track this meet at this distance. He cut back to a sprint following a turf route experiment and delivered an improved showing. He has been a clear-cut second in both of his main track races to date.

#6 RIM NICK makes his racing debut with winning credentials. He cost quite a bit more at the sale this spring than his sire's stud fee and is bred to do well early in his career. The presence of so many gate works is concerning but this top rider wins a lot for this barn.