

# Del Mar Bottom Line

*By John Lies*



John began working at Del Mar in 1993 and has provided analysis on simulcast television for nearly a decade. This year he joined Will Rogers Downs and Fair Meadows as the racing secretary, announcer and oddsmaker and has called races at all Southern California racetracks.

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Sunday, July 17

## **RACE ONE**

**#2 BRAINSPIN** is a strong contender to win as she makes her second start today. Her third-place finish after a slow start first out was respectable and one of the top riders in the room sticks with her. She is the only runner in the field that has raced this year.

**#1 ENGLISH QUEEN** has several things going for her despite drawing the rail for her debut. Her trainer is excellent in this category and she has some pedigree with her dam and a half sibling both two-year-old stakes winners. A leading rider adds to the allure.

**#6 PRAGMATICAL** returns to the races at age five after having raced just once nearly eighteen months ago. Her morning workouts look encouraging and the fact that her trainer has a good record with comebackers like this is a definite plus. So is her rider.

## **RACE TWO**

**#1 THANKSGIVING DAY** is shooting for three straight wins. He was claimed by a sharp outfit last out and retains the same jockey that has been winning on him. He seems solid enough in current form to stand the raise to a higher level today for his new barn.

**#6 DIVE DOWN** has a fighting chance in here. He has been popular at the claim box and changed hands after his last three straight races. He has been beaten as the favorite in his last two races by other horses in this race today but seems capable of turning the table.

**#7 ROMAN TIZZY** looks to connect consecutive wins. A lively pace up front would enhance his running style from off the pace. He has won at Del Mar before and finished in the money five times over this track while others lack winning experience at this oval.

### **RACE THREE**

**#8 CAMMY'S MUSIC** has a license to come out running. His young sire is off to a fast start with first-out juveniles and both of his siblings are winners. He also lands an outside post for a hustling rider and a trainer than can win first out. Watch the odds for clues.

**#4 MR. LOUIS** is a leading candidate off the relative strength of his third-place finish first time out. Today he will race with blinkers and rattled off a quick workout from the starting gate here four days ago to sharpen him up. His connections insure solid support.

**#6 SUPREME GIANT** could be the sleeper. This first-time starter has been training in Albuquerque for an outfit based in the Southwest that usually ships in some Del Mar runners each summer. One of his workouts and the presence of this jockey are interesting.

### **RACE FOUR**

**#8 SAUSALITO SUNSET** could be the right horse in this wide open race. She was close to a fast pace before finishing fourth in her only start behind a third-place finisher who came back and won here Opening Day. This barn does well with second-out maidens.

**#2 IT'S NOT SO EASY** was the runner-up in her debut and might be the one to beat. She may benefit from the addition of blinkers today after drifting around through the stretch of her only start. She does have speed and an excellent pilot to guide her home.

**#7 CHAMPAGNE ELEGANCE** is one to keep an eye on as she makes her racing debut in here. Her dam was a multiple stakes winner and her sire does have a two-year-old winner to his credit from his freshman crop. Her last three works were out of the gate.

### **RACE FIVE**

**#8 CHAT'S ON TOP** could be dangerous in this spot. The stakes winner over this course figures to be better off for some time on the shelf since March and has run well fresh in the past. She can be difficult to ride but her jockey has won with her before.

**#7 BOTTLE BLONDE** is a professional race mare on the turf with nine wins to her credit. She has won two of her last three on turf in Northern California but won a race here last year at a hefty mutuel. An honest effort from her would put her in the hunt.

**#10 HIJRA** may perk up today as she drops a level in class and removes blinkers. Her last win came against this caliber of competition though she now runs for the optional claiming price attached. The races she comes out of have been productive of late.

## RACE SIX

**#5 CELEBRITY STATUS** is tough to beat at this bottom claiming level. He has won three times for this price since March and most recently for his current jockey and trainer two starts back. He should be forwardly placed although he is cutting back in distance.

**#9 ADAIR** is realistically spotted by a shrewd outfit after having defeated restricted condition claimers twice since breaking his maiden. He does have three wins from only seven starts and has finished out of the money only once before. His rider knows him.

**#6 SWISS CHEESE** could be a threat in his first start of the year for a well-known jockey/trainer combo. The time off probably did him some good and he has not been worse than second in three starts at Del Mar including his maiden win first time out.

## RACE SEVEN

**#3 CHEEKABOO** carries the high weight in this handicap. She registered an upset winning a graded stakes race on turf at this distance in her most recent start. This task seems within her reach based on that accomplishment under the same Hall of Fame rider.

**#2 RIRI** won her first two starts with enough promise to make her a contender in this spot. She went to the sidelines after a poor performance here last fall but did all that was asked of her in her first two starts. It is a good sign that this leading rider signs back on.

**#9 NINE POINT NINE** ran the race of her life in victory last out going a mile on the turf. She seems to be on the upswing these days and may be able to stretch her speed effectively over this distance. Do not be surprised if she runs another big one today.

## RACE EIGHT

**#7 BLAME JOE** is a first-time starter that should go off at decent odds and has a few things going for him. His young sire is proving himself to be very strong as a stallion in terms of his progeny winning first out. His dam was a stakes winner here at Del Mar.

**#8 CHASING ACES** looks like the one to beat. He finished a good second in his one and only start last month and showed enough ability to expect that he could come back and win a race like this. Look for him to show speed and be a factor right from the start.

**#1 LAW ABIDIN CITIZEN** exits the same race as the second selection and checked in as the third-place finisher behind him. He too was making his career debut that day and has just as much right in theory to improve and run well in this spot under the same rider.

## RACE NINE

**#5 MIDNIGHT STORM** is the one to beat off his latest. The multiple graded stakes winner was at his best last out when digging deep for a Grade I win in a race where he had been second a year prior. He won the Del Mar Derby here at this distance in 2014.

**#9 BOLO** is a major threat when on his game. His last race is best ignored and his previous efforts this year prove he has what it takes to make a run at this one. He is a graded stakes winner on the turf and has won over this nine-furlong distance as well.

**#6 FINNEGANS WAKE** helps make this a tough field. The millionaire has won more races and earned more purse money than any of the others in this group. He also returned to winning form last out when racing over this distance. His class is unmistakable.

## RACE TEN

**#11 QUE CHISTOSO** should be rolling late and can win this from off the pace. His rider showed Opening Day that he is on his game right now and he has plenty of faith when this trainer gives him a leg up. He was aboard for this horse's only victory so far.

**#4 KRISTI'S COPILOT** is taking a drop in class for his first race since March. He shows up in a new barn these days and the fact they look to this leading rider is a positive sign. He has never raced for a claiming price before today and does have early speed.

**#12 IT'S JUST BOB** is also dropping to a new low in claiming price. He broke his maiden just two starts back and never picked up his feet facing tougher company than this in his only try against winners. He should be in a good position from the outside post.