

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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RACE ONE

#2 SAM SLICK has not raced for a claiming price before today. This will also mark his first start in a field restricted to one-time winners only. He should improve off his most recent performances today for those reasons. His trainer and rider make a good combo.

#4 PROHIBITION REPEAL just finished second in a race identical to this one in class and distance last out. He is an obvious threat again today based on that effort. He has been settling behind the early leaders before making his move in his races this year.

#7 TRIBAL ROAR should do well in this spot. His only top two finishes came here at Del Mar as a two-year-old and his current form is solid enough to keep up with this group. The last time he raced for a claiming price was the day he broke his maiden.

RACE TWO

#1 REVENUE VIRGINIUS has been facing tougher horses than the ones she meets today and should do well in this spot. Her leading rider has good success in tandem with this popular outfit and should draw plenty of support. She has a versatile running style.

#6 BAD JU JU fits well with this bunch. She has been out of the money only once in main track races and has not had the chance to race on the dirt here at Del Mar before. Her runner-up effort last out came over a shorter distance for a slightly higher price.

#2 HENNYTHELOVEPENNY has a few things going for her. This barn is excellent with both new claims and fresh runners like this one and they look to one of the top riders here the first two weeks to get the job done. She needs to brush up her most recent form.

RACE THREE

#4 CONTEMPLATE could be dangerous as he returns from a layoff. He represents a strong jockey/trainer team while listed as a gelding for the first time. His morning worktab looks solid including two moves over this turf course to indicate his readiness.

#5 MIDNIGHT RAMBLER ran better last out than a fifth-place finish would make it seem. He put in a good late run after leaving the gate slowly and now ventures south for the first time. He has had trouble in both of his turf starts and may take to this layout.

#1 ESPIRITO BUENO is an interesting longshot. Both of his turf races against California-breds were strong enough to give him a look in here though he was disqualified on one occasion. He has speed to use his position and could surprise.

RACE FOUR

#7 MAGICAL MYSTERY seems ready to win. Both of his route races when last seen this spring were good enough to expect he should break his maiden at this level. He is now listed as a gelding and picks up a leading rider while fresh for a top-class outfit.

#3 ACCELERATE has a right to win this as he stretches out around two turns for the first time. He was involved in the pace and finished in the money in two of three starts so far for a barn off to a winning start at the meet. He has the pedigree to handle a mile.

#8 CURLIN ROAD receives a jockey change to one who has been on fire the first two weeks this meet. He also switches back to the main track and seems best on dirt at this stage of his career. A good effort at decent odds may be forthcoming for those reasons.

RACE FIVE

#9 OK DOLL won her first start both on turf and going two turns in her last out. She figures to be tough against this field again today if she repeats that effort. She prevailed in a photo finish last time in a race where her rider dropped the whip in deep stretch.

#6 OPTIMISM AND HOPE may do better as she goes in a claiming race for the first time today. She is winless in six U.S. starts but has flashed hints of ability and now seeks her proper level. There is no question about the strength of her leading connections.

#2 MY FOOLISH HEART is a longshot of interest. The daughter of a solid turf stallion races on turf for the first time and did beat older horses out of state in her debut. She can definitely route and lands a leading rider for just her second out in Southern California.

RACE SIX

#12 STAND BY FOR NEWS could be a live price play. She draws outside with as much speed as any other runner in the field. She ships in from the Southwest off three straight seconds and is realistically placed for connections that do win races out here.

#9 SUNDAR CREEK looks like a live first-time starter. Her morning workouts are snappy for this level and she is a half-sister to three winners including one stakes winner. Her popular trainer and rider combination is a well-known one on this racing circuit.

#7 DIXIE DAME has finished in the money eight times in eleven starts without winning. She has been a dream for exacta and trifecta players but a frustration on win tickets. A leading barn switches from one hustling rider to another. She may just need a little luck.

RACE SEVEN

#7 DRESSED TO A T has never raced this far before but seems like the kind of runner that will do well in a marathon turf event like this one. Her best races have come beyond a mile and she is exclusively a turf runner with multiple wins under this same rider.

#5 HOLOGRAEME has the ability to win this if she fires. She has not raced in about sixty days for a leading trainer who wins with a good percentage of fresh horses. She figures to have benefitted from the break as she had not run well in four starts this year.

#4 LILY KAI is another question mark at the distance who could be tough if she stays the trip. The blossoming homebred finished third in a stakes race restricted to horses bred in California last out after defeating winners for the first time two starts back.

RACE EIGHT

#7 JOHANN'S COMMAND switches from an apprentice rider to one of the leaders today following three consecutive third-place efforts. He also moves up in claiming price for a trainer who has success when looking to this rider and might be the quickest early.

#2 RIVER HOSS has finished second twice in six starts and is listed as a gelding for the first time today for his first start in about two months. His trainer wins races off the bench like this and also clicks along with this rider. He lacks a clear running style but has speed.

#10 PRINCELY WARRIOR is worth a look first out. The homebred is out of a stakes-winning dam and a half sibling to two winners, one of which was stakes-placed. He wouldn't be a surprise as he represents top connections and draws towards the outside.