

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

#10 SKOOKUM SPIRIT may have found the right spot to win for the first time. He will race today with blinkers off and drew well to either attend or stalk the pace. This should be a better distance for him today after he finished fourth with a wide trip last out.

#4 CAVALRY is eligible to improve as he makes only his second start. He dueled between horses for the lead in his only start before packing it in. Today he drops to the bottom class level for maiden claimers and goes from one leading rider to another.

#1 GOTTA GET LUCKY makes his racing debut. His sire is above average in the category of winning with first-time starters. The rail is no bargain for an unraced maiden. He is a half sibling to a three-time turf winner. Watch the odds for more clues on him.

RACE TWO

#5 PAPACOOLPAPACOOL is trying to turn his form around and get back on track for a deadly stable. The stakes winner at this distance on turf will be handled by one of the leading riders today and may be better off coming from off the pace than attending it.

#1 LIEUTENANT COLONEL has never raced on turf before. He can win this race if he handles the surface switch though his pedigree is not as green as those of others. The distance seems perfect and he has been competitive in graded stakes on the main track.

#2 CAPE WOLFE adds blinkers for a leading stable with two runners in this field. The English-bred import has not won in this country since arriving from Ireland this winter. He finished a good second under this rider in April and now tries a longer distance.

RACE THREE

#6 BIG LEAGUE has worked fast at a nearby training center for his racing debut. The son of an excellent first-out juvenile sire has posted three consecutive bullet workouts from the starting gate in prep for this. Both the barn and rider are heating up right now.

#1 HONOR AND COURAGE has a right to be a good one. Expectations are high for this half-million dollar yearling from a running family with a win-early pedigree. He is stuck on the rail but comes from a barn known for winning with first-time starters.

#7 WHAT'S ON THE AGENDA is another first-time starter worth a long look. His young sire is off to a good start in the win-early department and his connections certainly win their share. Five of his last six morning workouts have come out of the starting gate.

RACE FOUR

#2 POWER JAM is very fast and should be tough to beat. All three of his races have been strong with two wins and a tough loss over this track last fall when second by a nose while heavily favored. The distance should not pose a problem and he has a lot of speed.

#1 WHO'S OUT has plenty of ability and may be putting things all together now at this stage of his career. His most recent win from just off the pace was solid and that kind of running style should suit him well in this spot today. His rider gets along well with him.

#5 CELEBRATED TALENT has a good record at this elongated seven-furlong sprint. That is an important factor at a sometimes tricky distance. He ships West in sharp form following two wins for a new barn and a claim. He may also offer some betting value.

RACE FIVE

#2 TRIBALIST doesn't race very often but always runs well when he does. The fact that he won his only start over this five-furlong layout is a definite plus. The win marked his last appearance and he comes back now at age five to make only his fifth lifetime start.

#1 HOT MARKET has enough speed to use his inside post to his advantage at this distance. He has finished in the money in five of seven starts on the turf though he has no experience over this course. He seems reliable enough for a good finish against these.

#9 LOVE MY BUD is one of many contenders with a chance in a wide open race. The five-year-old has only raced on turf once before and finished sixth. He has only raced six times in his career. Leave it to this rider to find a way to win despite drawing a bad post.

RACE SIX

#3 DREAMY GAL could be live at a price here first time out without flashy workouts. She hails from a seriously productive sprint family with a pedigree from top to bottom to do well right out of the box. The presence of this rider is also a plus in this context.

#10 VEILED HEAT came running on at the end to finish second in her debut here Opening Day. She caught the eye with her late flourish after having made a mess of the start and dropping far back early. Look for her to improve with the additional distance.

#5 R SUNDAY SURPRISE is a full sister to California Chrome. She finished a good third while showing late interest in her only start last month and today will race with the addition of blinkers. A step forward is expected this time, especially over more ground.

RACE SEVEN

#5 GRACIE RAGAZZA gets along famously with this rider. He has been on fire here this meet and this mare may be good enough in current form to knock out another win at this allowance level. It looks like she could get a perfect stalking trip behind all the speed.

#1 TAKE IT EASYPLEASE usually finishes in the money and always gets bet. Another honest effort from her is going to put her in the hunt again today as she tries this condition allowance level. She has won three times including once over this track.

#7 DESERT MADAM looked good winning last out after making an easy lead. She does not have to be in front early to win and has developed into a rather useful race mare over the last nine months. She has now won seven times but never at Del Mar before.

RACE EIGHT

#1 BEHOLDER already has etched her place in Del Mar history. The multiple Eclipse winning champion became the first mare ever to defeat males and win the signature Pacific Classic. She attempts to win this race in back-to-back years in her own division.

#2 STELLAR WIND is a Grade I winner. She is not expected to beat a mare like Beholder but seems clearly best of the other runners in this field. She finished second by a length and a half behind the big favorite last out when that rival was cruising home.

#5 DIVINA COMEDIA became a stakes winner in this country for the first time in her last start. The French-bred mare began her career on turf but does seem best racing on the main track in the U.S. at this point. A graded placing in this event would be of value.

RACE NINE

#2 BRONZINO finished third with a troubled trip in his last start. Today he will be ridden by one of the leading riders who has had considerable success riding on turf. This import has been third in both of his starts on turf in this country and may break through.

#8 FORAY won impressively in his only start last month on the East coast and was purchased privately by his current connections following that victory. He led every step of the way in a one-mile turf race. It is difficult to say what he was beating that day.

#7 PETE'S PLAY CALL could be worth a look at a price. This will mark his first start in a turf route and he may take to the trip. Both his jockey and trainer are clicking on their own of late and he rattled off a sharp morning workout here last week. He is on his toes.

RACE TEN

#7 DREAM IT DO IT is well spotted for a win. He ships in from the Southwest for the same connections that scored with a maiden here earlier in the week. He finished second in a pair of allowance races there restricted to non-winners of two races like this one is.

#2 SUAVEMENTE should do well at this level. The three-year-old he never faced older before today but has also not had a chance to face restricted non-two claimers until now. He seems good enough to do well against many horses that seem stuck at this class level.

#12 SCATASTIC may be overlooked but could wake up today. He is taking a significant drop in class after going off at long odds in virtually all of his starts since he broke his maiden last summer. He draws outside for a speedy rider and may be sitting on a surprise.