

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

#1 CELEBRITY STATUS should be tough against this field. The seven-year-old has been sharp enough to win three claiming races this year and today runs first off the claim. This distance is short for him and he did land on the rail but he is still the one to beat.

#5 AIN'T NO OTHER knows where the finish line is. He has won twelve times in his career and drops two levels to the bottom price here today following a fourth-place effort less than two weeks ago. The eight-year-old won a race up north as recently as this May.

#4 TRIPSKI helps make this race a real oldster's assembly at the ripe age of nine. The majority of his success came racing on the turf but he showed earlier this year he still has what it takes to win on the main track at this level. He does get a break in the weights.

RACE TWO

#4 ARROGATE is a promising up and comer. The budding three-year-old has won his last two starts with ease while thriving around two turns. He takes the next logical step up in allowance conditions today and appears to have trained smartly here in the mornings.

#5 TENIENTE CORONEL makes his first start for new connections following a claim in Kentucky for the same optional claiming price he shows up for here. He has been in the money in all five of his starts this year and seems good enough to do well out here.

#3 KRISTO is a contender at this level. This owner and trainer team is fresh off a very good week here at Del Mar. He seems now to have rounded back into top form and was flattered when the horse that just beat him last out won impressively right back.

RACE THREE

#4 MOOSE SKOWRON is the one to beat in here. He finished third for a slightly higher claiming price than this one in his last start for the same excellent trainer and jockey combination. A repeat of that effort should make him tough to beat in this race.

#1 HANDSOME HANK is the only horse in the race to have beaten winners but did it in Northern California. The most recent of his three victories came in wire-to-wire fashion around two turns on the main track. He is stuck on the rail while cutting back to a sprint.

#6 QUORUM OF JOY could be the sleeper in the field. He has been gelded since he last raced in February and has run only once since last summer. He takes a significant drop in class today. He should fire fresh because he won first time out as a two-year-old.

RACE FOUR

#2 ZENSATIONAL DANCER could be live at a price first time out. The daughter of a decent win-early sire is out a dam who won her racing debut as a two-year-old and is by an undefeated juvenile champion. This barn has considerable success with this jockey.

#5 TATTOOED KITTY would be no surprise if able to win. Her trainer sends them ready out of San Luis Rey Downs training center and they can win off modest work tabs. Her dam has produced eight winners and most horses by her sire are very precocious.

#3 FIRST SICILIAN hails from a barn that wins more than their share with first-time starters. She should be fully fit off the workouts she has logged in the mornings and she does land a top rider. The tote board should indicate more about her chances today.

RACE FIVE

#2 BIG MOVE is a very consistent California-bred. She got a feel for this layout here about three weeks ago and did well to finish third against tougher horses. Today she will be ridden by the same jockey who guided her to both of her lifetime wins to date.

#7 LAMONTAGNE has experience in short turf dashes like this one. She has landed in the exacta in seven of nine starts on the turf and ships west for a very capable trainer who normally wins a few races out here each summer. She also has plenty of early speed.

#3 HELL ON HEELS is an interesting longshot. She has never raced on turf before but is bred to handle it well. Her early speed should be to her advantage at this distance and she does hail from a leading stable. She gets in with lighter weight as a three-year-old.

RACE SIX

#1 SPIRIT RULES might wake up at this level of competition today. He has been disappointing in four starts this year after a smashing win here last summer sent him to the sidelines. He has earned a lot of money in his career and should be taken seriously.

#3 EIGHT SPOKES is an obvious threat. He finished second at this same state-bred level last out while coming back on down inside to the end and far in front of the third-place finisher. A similar effort today under the same top rider puts him right in the hunt.

#5 PRIME ISSUE should not be counted out. The eight-time winner has never been best on turf and returns to the main track following a poor showing on grass last out in his first start for these connections. He drops back to a sprint and lands a Half of Fame rider.

RACE SEVEN

#2 MO KNOWS might be able to steal this race on the lead if she can take advantage of the course profile with the inside rails out thirty feet. Sometimes it can be tough to close much ground over a more narrowed course. She is fresh off a front-running maiden score.

#4 COVER SONG is a legitimate threat. She ran a good third here on Opening Day in a race that was not restricted to three-year-old fillies like this one is. All three of her turf races have been competitive and she has more room to improve in only her fifth start.

#6 HOW UNUSUAL lost whatever chance she had at getting what she could when she had to check sharply at the head of the lane here last out. She gets back into allowance company today after tackling stakes horses in her last pair. Look for her to rebound.

RACE EIGHT

#3 BIG CHAMPION has a right to win first out. His lone sibling was a two-year-old winner and his sire is strong in the first-out winner category. This barn has been around a long time and knows how to get one ready. He had a sharp recent morning workout here.

#4 TRIPLE CLOWN has plenty of early speed. He seems like a good fit for a short sprint like this and takes a huge drop in class from the top to the bottom of the maiden ranks for his first race since January. It is possible this new gelding is too fast for these.

#2 SOAP BOX should be a factor right from the start and is eligible to win. He has battled for the lead into the stretch of his last three starts only to weaken late but finish in the money. This shorter distance may help and his jockey is one of the current leaders.