

# 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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Saturday, August 6

## RACE ONE

**#4 BASMATI** is eligible to perk up and good enough to win at this level. He has been knocking heads at higher claiming levels than this one for some time and drops today in his first start for a new barn. He is winless this year but has a good Del Mar record.

**#5 LUCKARACK** is an eight-year-old win machine. His most recent start up north resulted in his eighteenth lifetime win and fifth from his last seven starts dating back to last October. He is definitely good enough to win on this circuit for a winning stable.

**#1 NEXTDOORNEIGHBOR** ran poorly in his only start this year. He was untouchable in two starts here last summer and is a true professional with eleven wins and ten seconds on his record. It is tough to say whether or not the nine-year-old will bounce back here.

## RACE TWO

**#4 HAY DUDE** should be very tough at this level. The European import has won twice in this country including his only start for a claiming price in May. He drops out of the allowance ranks for a leading stable and picks up the rider that won on him two back.

**#3 ALL CALL** has won on the turf six times in his career. He ships west into a local stable after having raced near Chicago and in Florida earlier this year. A couple of his races produced wins that were good enough to be competitive out here at this level.

**#5 ROYAL BANKER** has a shot in here. He has managed to win a couple of turf races on this circuit over the last nine months and could win today if things work out just right. He does have the benefit of leading rider. He is unplaced in four starts on this turf course.

### **RACE THREE**

**#6 ANGEL LANE** might be tough to catch. She led before finishing second in a race here opening week while making her first start off the claim. She drops back down to that level today while cutting back to what is probably a better distance for her as well.

**#4 TRULY PONTI** faces winners for the first time today. She was flattered a bit when the runner-up behind her last out came back to win her next out and actually beat two next-out winners in that field. She has the speed to be in touch early at this distance.

**#5 MIA'S STORM** has a fighting chance in here. She has had many of them at this non-winners of two level but might be best sprinting on the main track. Many of her races came either on turf or going long. She has finished third in two of her last three starts.

### **RACE FOUR**

**#5 AUNTJENN** was impressive in a runaway win here two weeks ago adding blinkers in her second start. She took the lead from the rail and never looked back while going six furlongs. None of these others has won beyond five. She may also be the fastest of them.

**#2 MISS SOUTHERN MISS** looks like the one to beat. She won convincingly in her career debut before finishing a clear second as the favorite in a stakes race in her only other start. Another leading rider handles her today for a barn due to heat up this meet.

**#6 CHAMPAGNE ROOM** is worth considering despite the fact that she is a maiden. Her only start resulted in a second-place finish from the rail post in an effort that looked like a good one to grow on. Today she draws outside with a right to improve and can run.

### **RACE FIVE**

**#2 SUTTON'S SMILE** gets back on her best surface for today's event. She had little chance facing an undefeated Eclipse champion in her last start on the main track. This marks her first start against older horses but she seems good enough to beat this group.

**#1 SCATTAGIRL** is dangerous at decent odds. She wilted after setting the pace in a marathon last out under the same rider but cuts back to a good distance for her today and can win on or near the lead. There doesn't appear to be too much speed in this race.

**#9 STYLISH IN BLACK** has registered both of her career wins here on the Del Mar turf course. She had to go five wide into the stretch before finishing fourth in a race here Opening Day and is at risk of losing more ground again here from the outside post.

## RACE SIX

**#7 TRYST** seems ready to win. She has been second in all three of her starts while heavily favored each time. She was also well clear of a next-out winner last out. Her blue blooded pedigree gives her value as a future broodmare. She is an obvious threat.

**#5 VIVACIOUS BEAUTY** came back running with a competitive second-place finish here opening weekend after having been on the shelf for more than a year. The oft interrupted five-year-old mare does seem good enough to break her maiden at this level.

**#4 PRAGMATICAL** is another five-year-old mare that had a significant setback but is ready to return to the races. She has been scratched once this meet. Her only start was on turf and tells us little about what to expect today. It looks like she has trained strongly.

## RACE SEVEN

**#10 CURLIN RULES** is a solid price play as he makes his turf debut in a good betting race. The son of a good turf stallion breezed well over the course and is out of a dam that has produced five winners on the grass. He removes blinkers today for a leading stable.

**#3 ALASKAN SON** won here Opening Day in his first U.S. start. He gets in with his own age group today while meeting winners for the first time. It appears that his rider may have chosen this mount over another in the field after having won on them both.

**#2 BOMBARD** steadied at the eighth pole in a race here opening weekend before finishing fourth. Today he will be ridden by the leading jockey who won aboard him two starts back. He lacks experience and makes only his fifth start today but has some ability.

## RACE EIGHT

**#7 STRAIGHT FIRE** should be heavily favored and a popular Pick Six single for many players today. He finished a very promising and clear second in his debut here three weeks ago behind a horse that established a track record in victory. Beat him to win it.

**#4 EXCAVATION** managed a decent third in his only start and should benefit from the additional furlong of today's race. He has a right to improve with racing in general. A recent bullet workout on this track might be an indication that first race lit the fire in him.

**#3 VENDING MACHINE** could make his presence felt as he races for the first time. A leading rider shows up in the saddle on this half sibling to a Grade I winner at two. He has been training at Los Alamitos in the mornings and some of his workouts were sharp.

## RACE NINE

**#8 MONSTER BEA** seems to be thriving these days. He shipped into town Opening Day following a turf win in Kentucky and captured the Oceanside Stakes while drawing away. It doesn't appear that this race came up a whole lot tougher. He can win right back.

**#6 LUCKY BRYAN** won despite having to go wide in an allowance race here opening week. He too seems to be improving steadily and good enough now to test horses at this level. He represents the owner, trainer and jockey team that stole the show last Saturday.

**#3 MOONLIGHT DRIVE** might have been a race away from best when second last out. His U.S. debut in February was very impressive and he missed some time after that win before his last start. He is a threat if able to move forward and deliver on that promise.

## RACE TEN

**#9 ALASKAN CRUISE** looks ready to win and is the one to beat. He has been second twice in seven starts including his most recent one under identical conditions here three weeks ago and under this same rider. He was also five lengths ahead of third that day.

**#10 GAVINATION** is a threat despite the pile of ten losses on his lifetime record. He has been setting the pace in two-turn races and finished third in three of his last four. Front-running routers can be dangerous when cutting back to this seven-furlong distance.

**#8 RIDEO** has more room to improve than the top two selections in this race. He has only raced four times before and only once in a maiden claiming race. He was in fact claimed that day by his current connections when third and is now listed as a gelding.