

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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Thursday, August 25

RACE ONE

#3 PEARL DE VERE is the only multiple turf winner in the field having earned four of her seven lifetime wins on the grass. She races for the optional claiming price because she has already cleared this condition. She won here last out and can put wins together.

#8 STURDY ONE got beat a nose by a horse that came right back and won here over this course last week. She now has a win and a second in two close finishes in as many starts here at this turf distance. She has been first or second in three consecutive starts.

#5 LONGSTOCKING came running and finished second in a race much like this here last out over this course. That was her first race since January and she ran well. Another performance like that will likely put her in the hunt again today. She is lightly raced.

RACE TWO

#1 LAST ONE STANDING ran against much tougher horses than these in his last start and finished last. He has never won on the main track before but finished in the money in two dirt races prior to his last one. He can run with these horses of his own age group.

#4 HANDSOME HANK was stuck on the rail in a sprint race here last out and did okay to pick up fourth. He was doing much better in Northern California this year as a front-running router and gets to stretch back out to a mile in this spot. He should run well.

#6 CARLOS DANGEROUS seems most effective when he can make the lead. He has won on this track before and insures a lively run for the first turn from his outside post. The tempo of the race will determine a lot for this runner who is capable of winning.

RACE THREE

#4 LIL MISS SAPPHIRE opened up at a fast pace but weakened late and finished third here last out. She improved quite a bit while making her second start and today races a sixteenth of a mile shorter while taking the blinkers off. She could be tough to catch.

#6 GOSEECAL is a new face. She made one start in Florida and didn't break well at all before checking home sixth while weakly handled by an apprentice rider. She makes the trip out into a winning stable and lands one of the leading riders. Expect much better.

#1 MY MEL MAR landed on the rail but is a first-time starter worth looking at. Her trainer entered two in this race and goes to one of the successful new names here this meet in the jockey colony. Her sire wins with an above-average number of debutantes.

RACE FOUR

#5 SILENT MOVIES was involved in a ridiculous pace scenario here last out and did quite well to hang on for second with that considered. It is hard to get past the fact that he has lost eight races but this barn has been hot and there is a rider change this afternoon.

#10 WHAT'S UP GUS has a tall order from the outside in his first start in a year but does have ability and should be a price. He actually finished a troubled third in what turned out to be a productive race over this course when last seen here last summer.

#3 PATRON has only made one start. He dueled early with a monster winner who came back and romped again before caving in but goes long on the turf this time. The second-place finisher in that event came back and won going long on the turf here next out.

RACE FIVE

#6 ENDURING ERIN gets back on the main track today and seems best on dirt. She also owns a strong record here at Del Mar and goes for the optional claiming price here in her first start off the claim for one of the leading barns. She won on dirt two starts back.

#2 GRACIE RAGAZZA ran well when second best here in an identical race at the end of last month. She owns five lifetime wins on the main track and recorded four of them at this one-mile distance. Her last two wins have come under this jockey. She can win this.

#7 DIS SMART CAT is a game California-bred filly. She dug in to prevail in a sprint race here last out and has not finished out of the money in five starts now with three victories. She also ran a good second the only time she ran around two turns before.

RACE SIX

#1 PLUM DANDY ran into an absolutely freakish winner in his only start. He drew the rail that day and did show some mid-race interest but the jockey did not beat him up once the winner asserted his brilliance. This pricey colt should excel stretching out this time.

#8 VIBE should benefit from the experience of his one and only start. He appeared green racing down towards the inside and was also given more of a tour than a wallop much like the top selection in this event. The longer distance today should also help this colt.

#6 YODELERS WAY could be dangerous because of his early speed. This state-bred has sprinted four times and finished in the money on two occasions. It is tough to say how he will do going long this time but he does have speed and an excellent pilot.

RACE SEVEN

#6 MADAME MOUSSE is a good play at a decent price. She never got a chance to run in her last race which is a complete throw out. This barn has been on an unconscious win streak of late with all kinds of horses. She can sprint on the turf and is due for a big effort.

#8 EASY GRADER returned from a ten-month layoff and won here last out over this same turf distance. It marked her first start against older horses as well as on turf. She proved that she does have some ability and will be ridden by the same top jockey.

#3 NOT TOO SHINY is a four-time turf winner and a longshot threat. She is the only horse in the race to have won multiple races on the grass except the top selection above. She was third in Northern California last out and can hit the board from off the pace.

RACE EIGHT

#6 BIG DISCOVERY could be too much to hold off this time if he repeats his last. A runner-up effort over this track against similar last out sets the bar of what the others have to beat in this race. The fact he has nine in-the-money finishes and one win is a concern.

#7 LAMU was compromised by a wide trip last out and didn't do badly when fourth in the same race where the top pick was second. He never seemed to be in a good spot and may be sharper this time racing with blinkers on. The same rider tries him again today.

#1 CLUDE is back in about two weeks following a non-threatening third over this track when facing tougher horses. This race is for the same claiming price but restricted to non-winners of two races. This trainer is having a good meet and wins races with this rider.