

Del Mar Bottom Line

By John Lies



John began working at Del Mar in 1993 and has provided analysis on simulcast television for over a decade. Last 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.

Follow him on Twitter @johnjlies.

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RACE ONE

#2 IT'S A NEW YEAR might be tough to beat if he can avoid breaking slowly as he makes his third lifetime start. He improved in his second out when introduced to both claiming company and a route of ground while finishing ahead of two next-out winners.

#8 FLIP THE COIN JAN exits the same productive race as the selection above and defeated him while checking in as the runner-up. He has been second in his last two starts against very similar rivals including his most recent and only start for his current trainer.

#1 ARNO'S MANE MAN comes from the same barn as the selection just above. He ran into a good one last out in the maiden allowance ranks but should find this group softer. He did finish third in his career debut and lands a live apprentice rider on the stretchout.

RACE TWO

#6 FULL ACCESS may benefit from the services of one of the very best riders as he races first off the claim for a capable outfit. He has been moving up a little early in the race his last two starts but has been running well and seems to like the turf.

#2 ALLABOUTMIKE drops into a claiming race for the first time since he broke his maiden in May. He has plenty of speed to either make the lead or be forwardly placed at this distance as he attempts to win routing for the first time. His connections are red hot.

#8 KONA DREAMS is a bit tough to figure but has ability to win this event if he runs his race. It seems he is best when able to make the lead and control the pace. He does own a career turf win and switches back to the grass today for an experienced trainer.

RACE THREE

#2 KAFISTER is plummeting to the bottom of the class ladder in search of his proper level at this stage of his career. The seven-year-old is a serious racehorse when on his game but is unplaced in only two starts this year. He puts up a lot of fight when right.

#3 AIRFOIL is one of the major players in this field. He has two wins and a second from four starts this year and the back class most horseplayers would look for at this class level. He also won over this track in August and has shown he fires for different barns.

#9 PRAY HARD has his issues but is good enough to win this race if he holds together. He showed his appreciation for a relief in the class department by producing a win and a second in his last two starts. He was facing horses more like what he will meet today.

RACE FOUR

#2 WAR HEROINE is one of many first-time starters to consider in this field with some winning credentials. She is bred top and bottom to be precocious and her connections have been on a tear. She had trained at a local training center before her last two works.

#9 SUMMER'S INDY is the known commodity in the field with two seconds in as many starts. She looked decent with a willing finish in her last start at this same distance. She seems likely to be passing horses down the stretch and may be ready for a win.

#4 SPRING LILY is a family-bred from an experienced stable with an interesting pedigree. She has a right to win first out just as her mother did in her racing career. Both of her siblings have been winners and her sire gets a healthy share of young winners.

RACE FIVE

#8 BOURQUE is an interesting price play. He could have been right there at a big price here on closing day this summer if not for a tough trip at this distance. He was cooked on a hot pace against tough horses last out but seems better coming from off the pace.

#10 ZURI CHOP is a serious threat if he draws into the race after landing on the also eligibles at entries. He is at the risk of racing wide if he goes but has one of the best on his back to try and get him there on top. He has won two of his last three in turf sprints.

#1 SECRETO PRIMERO is a late threat and usually runs well here at this turf distance. He was off the track between January and August of this year and has not won a race in over a year. It is a good sign that the rider follows the mount off the claim for a new barn.

RACE SIX

#8 GOT EVEN is yet another top contender on the card for a barn that already has won a handful of races at the meet. This gelding has never won at Del Mar before but is dangerous when able to make the lead. He won wire-to-wire at this level just last out.

#2 IKE WALKER is serious threat. He has much going for him in this spot and looked good winning under this rider here in August while facing a slightly lesser field of claiming rivals. He likes to win, likes this track and excels at the one-mile distance.

#4 GENERAL KITTEN has only made six lifetime starts and never beaten winners but seems to be on par with the more accomplished optional claimers entered in this event. He has yet to race for any claiming price. He finished a very solid second here two back.

RACE SEVEN

#5 CASCADE ROCK has come close in two of his last three starts and may be ready for his first win. He probably got involved a little too soon going a longer distance last out but today switches to one of the very best turf jockeys. He looks like the one to beat.

#8 ICY STREET is overdue for his maiden win. He had miserable luck in two races here over the summer and probably should have won the last one here in August with a better trip. Last out he may have waited to make his move too long but was coming on late.

#11 TANIKO may be coming around. He perked up and finished up better than ever last out when allowed to fall behind early in only his second start both on turf and as a gelding. His dam has produced two exceptional turf runners of top class quality.

RACE EIGHT

#4 HOW ABOUT ZERO is coming off a career-best effort when she won very impressively last out in a downhill turf sprint nearly a month ago. She was also a stakes winner on the main track at this same distance when she was a two-year-old.

#3 BAD JU JU switches back to the main track and seems better on dirt. She has proved to be an outstanding claim for her connections though winless this year. She was second here in a stakes race on closing day of the summer meet and has won at this distance.

#8 BARBARA BEATRICE is fresh off a stakes win against state-bred fillies and mares down the hillside turf course in her last start. She may be better on the turf but has won on the main track before and is obviously in good form. Her trainer is one of the best.

RACE NINE

#9 BANZE NO OESTE might get the nod in a grass raffle. Many of the top contenders in this field are evenly matched and will take turns beating one another depending on how the race shapes up. He has the best of connections and enters in sharp form.

#4 CONQUEST SABRE CAT should be tough at this level. He has recorded a pair of turf wins in non-claiming events this year and drops while making just his second start off the claim for his current trainer. He has also won under this excellent rider.

#11 COLOUR ME HAPPY is a late threat. He is one of two entries in this race from the same barn and their running styles are compatible given that his stablemate likes to get out towards the front. He wilted over a marathon distance last out facing tougher.