

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. The local native also serves as Racing Secretary in Oklahoma at Will Rogers Downs and Fair Meadows and has been the voice of Kentucky Downs each September since 2008.

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Friday, August 3

RACE ONE

#5 WILL TELL finished well when fourth under this rider after a wide trip last out and fits well at this level. He has more speed than he showed last out and might be best sprinting on the main track. He is unplaced this year but the drop should perk him up.

#3 R CHA CHA got a confidence builder with an easy win as the heavy choice in a five-horse field last out. He takes the natural step into this next restricted condition despite the fact his claiming price is reduced. He will try to carry his speed an extra furlong this time.

#2 LUCKY STAXX was in a much tougher field than this one here on Opening Day. He dueled on the rail wearing blinkers and packed it in but will race without them today. Look for him to settle just off the pace as he did in his previous starts. He could rebound.

RACE TWO

#9 POWDER is well spotted to get back on track with her first win this year. She drops back to this state-bred allowance level for the optional claiming price and has beaten this caliber before. She hooked a future stakes horse last out and a live jockey rides her back.

#3 CHLOE BELLE always comes running and has been first or second in all five career starts. This will be her first try both on the main track and here in Southern California. She closed well to finish second in a large field up north when favored last out.

#7 PIED N TRUE has been on the bench since April and makes just her third start this year. She typically runs well fresh and may have been pointed for this meet because she likes this track. She has finished in the money in four of five starts here at Del Mar.

RACE THREE

#6 SUNDAY PROPHET pulled and appeared too eager early in the race while wearing blinkers in her last start and finished third. She will race without them this afternoon. It is a good sign that this leading rider sticks with her. She may put things together this time.

#10 INTO GLAMOUR comes from the same barn as the top selection and finished half a length in front of her when second under this rider last out despite having been fractious in the starting gate. She has speed in a race where the pace figures to be honest.

#9 POINT TO POINT is worth including at a price. Her sire wins with a high rate of first-time starters and they also strike at a high clip when racing on turf for the first time. She is related to three winners including a graded stakes winner and a turf winner.

RACE FOUR

#8 CAPTIVATE won in his most recent start when dropped in for a claiming price for the first time in his career. The horse he beat came back and won impressively. His start in that race made him eligible to the conditions of today's race and he fits very well.

#1 LUCKY ROMANO has not raced since February but has a right to come back running. He broke his maiden by eight lengths under this rider sprinting here last summer and was third in a stakes race here the weekend of the Breeders' Cup during the fall meet.

#6 INVASION LOOMING needed thirteen tries to win for the first time but did so in his most recent start down the hillside turf course. He was reclaimed and his effort looks stronger when considering that three horses in that field came back and won next out.

RACE FIVE

#7 SEA SENSATION deserves extra credit for her win last out. She fought the jockey under a hammerlock in her first turf route then waited and steadied into the stretch before surging clear while much the best. She picks up a Hall of Fame rider this afternoon.

#8 MONGOLIAN HUMOR has only raced three times and not been worse than second. She recorded her lone win in her only try on turf two starts back and was second while six lengths clear of a next-out Del Mar winner in her first try against winners last time.

#3 TELL ME MORE is one of two entries in this field from one of the powerhouse stables here this meet. The race did not set up well for her last time when she was second as the favorite but it looks like there is more pace this time around. That should help her.

RACE SIX

#6 LEADVILLE nearly pulled off a giant upset in a stakes race up north last out when racing both on dirt and in blinkers for the first time. He broke slowly and was difficult to manage but did not miss by much. His lone sibling was a two-year-old stakes winner.

#10 STARRING JOHN WAIN draws outside for a red-hot barn and is sure to appreciate the extra furlong of this race following his debut. He was not fast early but improved his position while racing inside that day. He switches to a journeyman rider.

#7 ITS FIVE SOMEWHERE ran sneaky good in his one and only start for a claiming price about a month ago. He appeared to lose focus shortly after the start and dropped far behind the field but came charging at the end and galloped out in front. He can run a bit.

RACE SEVEN

#9 OUT OF THE FLAMES has not raced since April but enters in search of back-to-back victories in non-graded stakes company and her third straight win. She was a closing third after a slow start in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf sprint here last fall.

#6 OKINAWA ships in for the out-of-state bonus program and exits a key race in New York. Her second-place effort in a turf sprint was sandwiched between a pair of next-out winners there and a third one in the also rans. She has trained swiftly over this course.

#8 SPELLKER is best on turf over the shortest distances such as this one. Her trainer is very adept at sending the right horses out to Del Mar and has won many races here over the years. She has ability to win this and should be rolling from just off the pace.

RACE EIGHT

#7 GIA LULA has had her chances at higher levels and drops in search of that maiden win. She also benefits from the light weight of an apprentice rider for the first time and switches from both turf to dirt and route to sprint. Today is the day for her to step up.

#3 PEACHY ran well when second at long odds in her only start a few weeks ago. She was not quick early but angled out and moved up before earning the place from between horses in the drive. She gets off the rail this time and will probably improve off that run.

#12 BREATHLESS CHARM could improve at a price. She was done after a half mile and ran like she needed a race in her only start about two months ago but should be more fit. She recorded a sharp recent half-mile workout here to indicate she is doing well.