

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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Saturday, August 4

RACE ONE

#8 FORTNITE DANCE ran well in his only start here two weeks ago and finished fourth after leading briefly into the stretch. Today he will race with blinkers on and can improve with a race over the track. He retains the same apprentice for a leading barn.

#2 ITS GONNA HURT got burned up on the pace in his only start and tired down the stretch to finish seventh. He was bet down to favoritism that day and may benefit from that race over the track. All six of his siblings are winners. This barn is winning races.

#6 SAMURAI JACK is another in this field with a race over the track opening week. He finished third that day after breaking sharply while no match for the top two. This barn sent out a winner on the turf here Thursday. His full sibling is a minor winner.

RACE TWO

#1 CLOSING TIME might be best as a late-running sprinter. He cuts back in distance from one mile and drops back into a claiming race today while catching a field loaded with early speed. He often settles for minor awards but should be rolling from behind.

#6 NIGHT AT THE OPERA draws outside the other speed rivals in the field and can be effective stalking the pace as well. He was claimed out a fourth-place effort up north last out in a field that included two next-out winners. He broke his maiden at this distance.

#5 SURFSIDE SUNSET was reclaimed and ran second by a nose last out and now drops two levels below that price. He was cut out to be a decent horse and has been sharp in his last pair since dropping out of much tougher races. He comes from just off the pace.

RACE THREE

#7 PLAY HARD TO GET likes this turf course and does well at a mile and an eighth. He was no threat in a tough race here Opening Day but drops to an allowance/optional claiming level where he can win with a top effort. His speed could be dangerous in here.

#5 CONQUEST TYPHOON has been claimed in four of his last seven starts and goes for a new outfit again today. He has earned a lot of money on the turf in his career and won two of three starts over this course. His last win came a year ago here last summer.

#1 ANY QUESTIONS has won two of his last three including one at this distance. He is a turf specialist with six wins over the lawn and is a candidate to either make an easy lead or stalk the pace. He won first off the claim for this barn two back and lands a top rider.

RACE FOUR

#5 OUR SILVER OAK won as a big longshot in his one and only start on the fourth of July. He rolled past one of the top contenders in this field that day and showed that he can rally from off the pace. That is important because there figures to be a jam for the lead.

#2 LUCK'S ROYAL FLUSH is getting better and better and now looks for three straight wins following a stakes victory up north. He posted a very sharp morning drill here about a week ago to indicate he is doing well. He looks like the quickest in the race.

#1 OLIVER has improved with each start and has the benefit of a win over the track. He rolled from an outside post that day while much best but now must deal with the rail in this tougher spot. He has progressed since the top two picks beat him first and second out.

RACE FIVE

#6 MADAKET SUNSET looks live at a decent price for a barn picking up steam. Her sire is excellent in the juvenile first-time starter category and her dam was a stakes winner at two. Both of this filly's siblings are winners. Her last workout was solid.

#3 ROYAL DESCENDENT finished a clear second in her one and only start about sixty days ago and today races with blinkers on. She is half-sister to a Grade II-placed winner of six figures and her dam was a multiple graded stakes winner. We know she can run.

#1 VARANASI has raced twice before today and finished third each time in maiden allowance company. She spent nearly a year away from the races between those two starts and may be poised to move forward today. She also boasts a strong pedigree.

RACE SIX

#8 CATFISH HUNTER has won three of his last four starts. He might be good enough to withstand the raise into tougher open company today. He has finished second twice racing on turf and seems like the type of horse that can do well at this abbreviated trip.

#5 LITTLE JUANITO won here at this distance under this rider during the Bing Crosby season last fall. He has not raced since January and has been gelded since that start. This barn sent out a winner here on Thursday. He has trained sharply over the main track.

#6 OISEAU DE GUERRE finished fifth going one mile last out but seems better around one turn. He has some speed but may be closing from behind at this distance and should be finishing strongly. This barn wins races with this rider and he is having a good meet.

RACE SEVEN

#6 SIGALERT has a lot going for him first time out. His stable is having a big meet and wins a good number of races with this leading rider. He cost some money at the sale this spring and his lone sibling was a two-year-old debut winner. His last workout was sharp.

#3 DARK PRINCE ran into a monster in his only start six weeks ago and finished fifth after showing some speed. He has trained forwardly since for his star stable with many showcase runners in the shed row. They may have sorted this one into a good spot.

#12 BABAEL is live if he gets into the race. He is the son of an excellent first-out juvenile sire and all three of his siblings are winners. His trainer knows how to get one ready to win first out and his last workout from the gate sparkled as best of the morning.

RACE EIGHT

#10 FAHAN MURA is the one to catch. She has gotten good with her runaway front-running style and won a stakes race over this course just two weeks ago. She has won all five of her starts in Southern California and seems to be in the zone here in the Pacific.

#8 SOPHIE P was not able to produce her best last out and is capable of winning with a good trip. She waited for room on the far turn following her Grade I win before angling in and waiting briefly behind a tiring rival then galloping out in front past the wire.

#5 TISBUTADREAM is an interesting longshot racing on Lasix for the first time as she makes her U.S. debut. This barn has won with such imports here over the years and she ran into a star last out in England. She was twice Group III placed in Europe last year.

RACE NINE

#6 SOLID WAGER does well in these elongated sprint races and enters in good form for a leading stable. He won under this rider last out and has been first or second in half of his ten local starts over the years. He hits hard for the optional claiming price attached.

#1 TATTERS TO RICHES was a promising debut winner here last summer. He went to the sidelines following injury and now races for the first time this year. The post position is not ideal but he has a lot of ability and appears to be training well. He must be feared.

#9 FLAGSTAFF has only raced twice and won last out following a second-place effort in his debut. The horse he beat came back to finish second again but the third-place finisher was a next-out winner here Wednesday. He is fast and seems to have potential.

RACE TEN

#1 CAPALL ran his best race yet when second last out in his first start both for a claiming price and wearing blinkers. He finished in front of three next-out winners in that field and races around two turns for the first time today. He acts like he should route.

#6 SPIRIT MISSION is dangerous as he races on turf for the first time and is bred top and bottom to like the grass. He races on this circuit for the first time after two starts in New Jersey this summer and one start in France last year. He is dropping in for a tag.

#2 ZIPMAN is very likely to finish in the money. He has been second or third in six of his nine lifetime starts and he missed by only a nose racing over this distance in March under this rider. A win by him would not be shocking but he has had some chances.