

Date: November 14th, 2021

Track: Del Mar

PRINT

By Michael Hammersly

**BEST BET: Basilia (9th race)**

**First Race**

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**1. Del Mar Drama**

**2. Prance**

**3. Bestrella**

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**DEL MAR DRAMA** posted her lone win on this course and while that came a while ago (almost 16 months) she's run some decent races since, and bulk of which came vs. tougher. So, she's back to a course you know she likes with some class relief and a bullet work Nov. 8 says she's doing well. **PRANCE** posted 2 near-misses in races just like this here in the summer, missing by a head and a nose. She's been given some time since and her lone win came off a similar layoff. She's a huge threat if she returns with her summer form intact. **BESTRELLA** was a better-than-looked 5th in a race like this here Aug. 19 (PRANCE was 2nd) as she had traffic trouble in the lane. She was then unable to menace tougher. The return to this level may do the trick.

**Second Race**

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**1. Bold Choice**

**2. Mo Connelly**

**3. Square Footage**

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**BOLD CHOICE** was a solid 2nd the one time she tried this level. She was no factor in her 2 other starts but those came in stakes. She's back in vs. maidens here and the fairly quick turnaround encourages, too. Her lone sib is Stir the Pot (17-1-5-2, \$58K). **MO CONNELLY** looks headed the right way as this daughter of HOY Mineshaft comes off a nice rallying 2nd in a race like this at SA last month. Another step forward makes her a danger. **SQUARE FOOTAGE** debuts with plenty of works to indicate an ample foundation. Her lone sib is full-sister Wandering Patrol (8-2-1-3, \$99K). **PROFESSORS' PRIDE** has worked awfully well for this first run including 3 recent bullets.

**Third Race**

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**1. Apprehend**

**2. Sumter**

**3. Admiral Halsey**

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**APPREHEND** chased the pace and stayed on for 2nd in a superb debut run on dirt here Sept. 4. The guy he chased (Corniche) came back to win the G1 American Pharoah AND G1 BC Juvenile and is a lock to be named champion 2yo male. And this guy wasn't beaten far at all by that foe. Of course, it's new footing today and while sire Arrogate was a great horse he never ran on turf and hasn't had much success getting turfers - but it's early in his stud career, though ill-fated he dies after just 2 crops. **SUMTER** is the proven commodity coming off 2 sharp 2nds in races just like this, the first here Sept. 2 and the 2nd at SA Oct. 1, so he handles this footing and trip well. His full-sister is Pizzazz (11-2-1-2, \$123K, 8-1-1-1 on turf, SW and SP on turf). **ADMIRAL HALSEY** showed turf talent back east. The \$230K gelding showed tactical speed and versatility in his first 2 starts, both turf sprints like this, and has worked superbly for his first start for D'Amato and first as a gelding. His 3 sibs to race are all winners including full-sis Balon Rose (cost \$1.5 million, was 9-1-3-0 for \$94K, all on turf).

**Fourth Race**

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**1. Rookie Year**

**2. Back Ring Luck**

**3. Mr. Pickles**

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**ROOKIE YEAR** ran the best race of his life, a 9 1/4-length romp, in his only prior try on this track, that coming July 23. So it's obvious he likes it here and while he was only 4th in his last 3 all that came vs. tougher than he faces here. The drop and return to this place can get him back on track. **BACK RING LUCK** was unable to make a dent in 5 starts from April into August but all that came vs. much tougher. He dropped considerably at LRC last time out Sept. 25 and responded well, posting an easy win. It seems he's found his proper level. **MR. PICKLES** stalked the pace and stayed on for 2nd to BACK RING LUCK in that aforementioned Sept. 25 run, albeit well beaten. He then shipped to FNO, prompted the pace but tired in the lane to end up 4th as the 6-5 favorite. He worked well at GG Nov. 7 and returns to SoCal and dirt.

**Fifth Race**

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**1. Over Attracted**

**2. Sugary**

**3. Freedom Lass**

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**OVER ATTRACTED** finished with good energy for 2nd to today's foe **SUGARY** in a race like this at SA Oct. 11 but this gal had plenty of traffic issues. She won on this course July 29 so she handles this place and it's encouraging to see no drop by Maker, who claimed her a few starts back. **SUGARY**, as noted, beat the top pick when they met at SA Oct. 11 so she's the real deal. Three of her 7 wins have come here and that Oct. 11 win came after a couple months off so she's eligible to do even better. Wong saw fit to claim her out of that Oct. 11 win and has super off-the-claim numbers. **FREEDOM LASS** set the pace at this trip at SA Oct. 22 vs. a bit tougher but tired late to end up 4th as the 3-2 favorite. She gets some class relief and it's most encouraging Prat sees fit to ride. She won here a year ago and her tactical speed may get her first run on the top 2.

**Sixth Race**

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**1. Durante**

**2. Blackadder**

**3. Union Train**

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**DURANTE** duelled and tired to 6th in his sprint debut here Aug. 28 but then moved to this trip at SA Oct. 15 for start No. 2, set a pressured pace and stayed on gamely to be a sharp 2nd. That's a promising Baffert who beat him (and who came back to run in the G1 BC Juvenile) and this guy also finished over 9 lengths clear of 3rd. He certainly looks headed the right way and he worked splendidly here Nov. 7. His lone sib is Seahawk Lisa (22-3-1-3, \$78K).

**BLACKADDER** may be the better of the 2 Bafferts (also sends out PORTSMOUTH). The son of top sire Quality Road cost a bunch (\$620K) so there are expectations here and his sprint debut at SA Oct. 22 wasn't bad as he ran 3rd to highly regarded stablemate **Messier** who goes in the G3 Bob Hope later on this card as the likely heavy favorite. He's worked well since and his lone sib is full-sis Gingham (10-3-4-1, \$214K, SW, G2/G3 SP). **UNION TRAIN** didn't do much in his debut here Aug. 28 but Shirreffs isn't known for having his 2yo firsters cranked. He IS known for having them primed 2nd time out so it would be no shock to see this \$325K son of Union Rags vault forward with that lone sprint under his belt and the move to this longer trip. His 2 sibs are multiple winners **Torres Del Paine** (21-3-4-2, \$138K, 2 SPs) and **White Frost** (4-2-1-0, \$123K, G3 SW). **PORTSMOUTH** gives Baffert 2 looks at this. The son of Twirling Candy didn't run badly in his debut here Aug. 21 and the 1-2 finishers of that race are both slated for today's G3 Bob Hope later on the card.

#### Seventh Race

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##### 1. Greg's Diva

##### 2. Dancing Crane

##### 3. Equilove

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**GREG'S DIVA** has done little wrong in 8 starts, including some good work in races just like this. The filly came back after over 8 months to set the pace and finish 3rd in a race like this at SA Oct. 17 and with that under her belt she can vault forward. Her speed makes her the one to catch and her best work has come on this course (3-1-2-0). **DANCING CRANE** set the pace vs. some real toughies in a turf sprint at SA March 6. She hasn't run since but Glatt is strong off the bench, she's worked well and lures Prat. **EQUILOVE** dueled and paid the price in a turf sprint stakes at SA Oct. 3, a run that looks even better as that race produced 3 next-out winners. She gets some class relief, which has to help, and while she has speed she's no need-the-lead type.

#### Eighth Race

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##### 1. Messier

##### 2. Winning Map

##### 3. Forbidden Kingdom

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**MESSIER** didn't just whip maidens at SA Oct. 22, he did so without taking a deep breath as the \$470K son of Empire Maker barely got out of 2nd gear while winning easily. That shows a ton of potential and promise, though the Beyer wasn't any great shakes (82). In fact, it was less than what stablemate **WINNING MAP** did when he got his diploma at SA Oct. 3 (85). Still, as noted he passed the eye test with flying colors. **WINNING MAP**, like the top pick from the Baffert barn, looked super wiring maidens at SA Oct. 3, earning a better Beyer than stablemate **MESSIER**. He cost \$525K so you know there are expectations here, too. **FORBIDDEN KINGDOM** tries to upend the Baffert trio (also sends out **KAMUI**) as the \$300K son of **HOY** and Triple Crown winner American Pharoah won his dirt sprint debut here Aug. 21 in smart fashion. He then tried turf and stakes company at SA Oct. 1 and wasn't disgraced when 3rd. He's back to dirt and that might get him back on track.

#### Ninth Race

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##### 1. Basilia

##### 2. Cecile's Chapter

##### 3. Chasingserendipity

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**BASILIA** has been knocking on the door and may be ready to break through. He's run well on this course and drops to face peers (3yos) only, which has to help. She has enough tactical speed to get a nice trip stalking the pace and sharp recent works say she's doing well. **CECILE'S CHAPTER** has 4 good 2nds in her last 5 starts, the only not-so-hot outing coming when overmatched here Aug. 14. That isn't the case here and a solid 2nd at SA last time out at this trip at this level stamps her a good fit. She is stuck way outside, however. **CHASINGSERENDIPITY** was a good 3rd in a race like this here July 29. She was no factor in her next 2 (8th in each) but those came vs. tougher. She's a better fit here.