

Date: November 26th, 2021**Track:** Del Mar**By Brad Free*****BEST BET: Rockemperor (7th race)*****First Race****1. Red Storm Risen****2. Whooping Jay****3. Dubby Dubbie**

A bad trip cost **RED STORM RISEN** last out; he finished third in a similar turf route that he might have won with any racing luck. He got keen while fifth on the rail, was blocked through the stretch with nowhere to run, and missed by only a length and a quarter. With clear sailing, running back at the same N2X level, he can make amends. **WHOOPING JAY** stretches out and drops to allowance/optional \$100k claiming after a tough trip in a Cal-bred turf sprint stakes. First or second in 10 of 15 starts, he has routed only three times in his career: one win and two seconds last year. **DUBBY DUBBIE** drops from a stakes race, his \$40k claiming win two starts back puts him in the hunt. MEDIA BLITZ will be rolling late. EASTERN OCEAN stretches out following a solid comeback win in a N1X turf sprint.

Second Race**1. She's So Shiny****2. A Paycheque Smile****3. Starship Diplomacy**

SHE'S SO SHINY drops to maiden-50 after falling short her first seven starts vs. special-weight maidens and/or stakes fillies. Notwithstanding an ambitious 2yo campaign, this is her easiest chance yet. She looks like the speed of the field. Come catch her. **A PAYCHEQUE SMILE** drops in class and switches riders after a pair of troubled trips vs. MSW rivals. Her trainer-jockey combo is 5-for-9 the past two years with juveniles dropping to MCL. **STARSHIP DIPLOMACY** wheels back two weeks after a spin-around-the-course debut prep on turf. Improvement likely second time out facing easier. CLASSICAL ROMANCE finished second two recent starts in Kentucky. That makes her a fit vs. these.

Third Race**1. Champagne Camie****2. Urban****3. Ayellowroseoftexas**

CHAMPAGNE CAMIE makes her first California start after facing top maiden company three starts in New York. The fast-pace race she exits (finished fifth) produced a pair of next-out maiden winners; she also faced top company her first two starts including subsequent G2 winner Sail By in her debut. 'CAMIE looked good working in company Nov. 14 (viewed on XBTv.com), followed by a solid five-furlong drill last weekend. All systems got. **URBAN** might want a longer distance than five furlongs on turf, but she adds blinkers and ran well on this course in summer. She will start for trainer Aimee Dollase, while trainer Simon Callaghan serves a 15-day suspension. **AYELLOWROSEOFTEXAS** showed nothing in her debut, but that was a fast-pace dirt race against better. Turf should be okay, her sibling Anothertwistafate won graded stakes on dirt and turf. Improvement possible second time out. She was listed as a vet scratch twice since raced. DARLING DONNA, stablemate of the top choice, showed run both starts at Parx including a runner-up finish behind a next-out allowance winner.

Fourth Race**1. Secret Touch****2. Mongolian Wind****3. Synthesis**

Back in six days after a romping win for \$16k claiming, up three class levels to \$32k, **SECRET TOUCH** can win if he runs as fast this Friday as he did last Saturday. He won by more than five lengths with a speed figure close to par for this higher level. **MONGOLIAN WIND** moves up one level after he was claimed from a solid runner-up comeback. His new trainer Richard Baltas does super first start off the claim at 7-2 odds or less: 10-for-24 (42 percent) the past five years. 'WIND fits the category. **SYNTHESIS** finished in front of 'WIND when they met two starts back. SYNTHESIS figures for a forwardly placed trip, while UNBROKEN STAR should be running late.

Fifth Race**1. Midnight Special****2. Rookie Mistake****3. Mac Daddy Too**

Based on his workmanlike victory vs. \$20k claiming turf sprinters at Golden Gate, **MIDNIGHT SPECIAL** looks like the right horse to win this N1X/optional \$40k claiming turf sprint. He has tactical speed to be positioned just off the pace, a repeat of his 86-Beyer win last out might be enough. The caveat is first-off-the-claim runners from this stable tend to be overbet. **ROOKIE MISTAKE** did not have a great trip last out finishing fourth while racing for the first time in nine months. Five furlongs might be short for the late-runner, but he will

be finishing and closers have won their fair share of turf sprints. The rail setting is 12 feet Thursday and Friday, for the first time this meet. Meanwhile, **MAC DADDY TOO** benefits by the shorter trip. He set the pace and faded to finish third in his comeback at six and a half. that was his first start since February, he can improve with that race under his belt and a shorter distance. **SILARDI** has the inside post and some speed. He might keep 'DADDY TOO company.

Sixth Race

1. Honor Among Men

2. Gerlach's

3. Hot Pursuit

Runner-up both recent starts at this N2L claiming level, **HONOR AMONG MEN** merits horse-to-beat status returning to the track on which he broke his maiden in summer. Last time out he finished more than five lengths clear of third, and was claimed. Obvious choice, it appears. **GERLACH'S** dusted maiden-20s three weeks ago with a speed figure fast enough to win at this level. Last-out maiden-claiming winners always command respect vs. N2L claiming company. **HOT PURSUIT** finished an okay third here opening week against similar company. **INCH** drops to the bottom class level for winners.

Seventh Race

1. Rockemperor

2. Friar's Road

3. Say the Word

ROCKEMPEROR looks tough in this G2 turf marathon, based on his G1 win two back at Belmont Park and better-than-looked midpack finish last out in the Breeders' Cup Turf at DMR. He was shuffled and lost position on the far turn, hit heavy traffic into the lane, and finished as well as he could. Beaten only six and one-half lengths, he would have much finished closer with a different trip. The veteran gets class relief and should be tough to beat at a relatively short price. Late-developer **FRIAR'S ROAD** found his niche after switching to turf this year at age 4. He trounced a N1X turf marathon on this course by more than four lengths, and proved that race was not a fluke next out by finishing a close third in a G2. That race was early October, he enters this race fresh, obviously likes DMR, and will be smoking late. **SAY THE WORD**, third in this race last year and a G2 winner early this year at this mile and one-half trip, returns from a three-month respite. He has aimed specifically to this race, and should fire first start back. G2 winner **AWARD WINNER** has a forwardly placed running style that could lead to a cozy trip positioned second behind likely pacesetter **ACCLIMATE**.

Eighth Race

1. Admirably

2. Brace for Impact

3. Quick Finish

ADMIRABLY returns to his preferred surface, which is dirt, and meets a field with speed to flatter his late kick. He was claimed two back from a better-than-looked runner-up finish for \$16k, misfired last out on turf, and now drops back to Cal-bred N1X/optional claiming for high-percent second-off-the-claim trainer Mark Glatt. His last 12 second-off-the-claim runners produced six wins, three seconds. **ADMIRABLY** will have to catch **BRACE FOR IMPACT**, a fast-working speedster who runs well fresh and might be the speed of the field. **IMPACT** won a maiden race on this track last fall returning from a layoff, he has posted mostly fast works for his first start since February. **QUICK FINISH** finished second all three previous dirt sprints on this track. He has been stuck at this level for a while, but his figures suggest he is a contender while making his first start since March. **EL TIGRE TERRIBLE** will be rolling late; **SUNRISE JOURNEY** adds speed.

Ninth Race

1. Badger Kitten

2. Acoustic Shadow

3. Bowl of Cherries

BADGER KITTEN looked uncomfortable much of the race last time in a similar maiden-claiming turf route. Racing inside and behind runners, she was keen and unrelaxed until she got to the outside on the far turn. She uncorked a little move while wide, then sputtered. Not good. But her close third two starts back, behind a pair of next-out winners, might be good enough. The quirky **KITTEN** is not easy to ride, but the outside post might actually work in her favor. She may lose ground, but she seems to run best when she is outside in the clear. Tab for a minor upset over stablemate **ACOUSTIC SHADOW**. The latter finished in the money both maiden-claiming starts; this is her first start in eight months. **BOWL OF CHERRIES**, in the money five of nine sprints, stretches out for the first time. She is quick enough to make the lead if she wants, and though the mile distance is a challenge, she has run well against decent maidens. **WITCH MOON** might be ranked too low by this handicapper. She finished second, two and one-half lengths clear of third, last time in a similar maiden-50 turf mile.