

By Brad Free

BEST BET: Defunded (10th race)**First Race****1. Trusty Rusty****2. Suburban Prince****3. Top of My Game**

Maiden 2yos race for a \$62.5k claim tag, Doug O'Neill-trained firsters **TRUSTY RUSTY** and **SUBURBAN PRINCE** look live. **TRUSTY RUSTY** is by Tapiture, whose debut juvenile progeny have won 16 percent. The dam of **RUSTY** produced four runners, three winners. Decent work pattern. **SUBURBAN PRINCE** also appears to have worked well, also at San Luis Rey. First-crop sire Good Samaritan is 1-for-13 with debut 2yos. The top pair both were purchased for \$60k, therefore this maiden-claiming level is a reasonable spot at which to debut. **TOP OF MY GAME** drops from thirds in Kentucky maiden special-weights. **CORTESE** also drops from better maiden races in Kentucky, with the top figures. Runner-up by a neck last out, he will be among the favorites.

Second Race**1. Continental Divide****2. Exceed Speed Limit****3. Nolongerahobby**

The \$12.5k claiming win two back by **CONTINENTAL DIVIDE** is fast enough to win this Cal-bred N1X/optional \$20k claiming race. **DIVIDE** was claimed last out by Peter Miller, subsequently gelded, and runs over the Del Mar track on which he won the Graduation Stakes as a 2yo in 2017. Improvement likely for new connections. **EXCEED SPEED LIMIT** stretches out for the first time in his 4-for-12 sprint career, also trying dirt for the first time. The field's only four-time winner should be forwardly placed first since claimed for \$25k from a third-place finish by trainer Michael McCarthy (1-for-5 past five years f.o.c.). **NOLONGERAHOBBY** fits on figures, but his last win was nearly two years ago. His 35 starts: 3 wins, 14 seconds, 6 thirds. **MOBOU** is rounding into form.

Third Race**1. Comanche Country****2. Green Eyed Lady****3. Quarantella**

Promising field of MSW 2yo fillies at a mile on turf, Ireland import **COMANCHE COUNTRY** is the choice in her U.S. debut. Runner-up by a nose in her debut, she raced in a Group 3 next time but was in tough. Several from the race ran well since, including winner Mediate who returned to win another G3. **COUNTRY** has worked well in the U.S., in company. Trainer Phil D'Amato is 4-for-9 with Euro-shippers in maiden turf routes the past five years. **GREEN EYED LADY** showed promise in her third-place debut: not quick, raced wide, went evenly while wanting more distance. She gets it, stretching from five furlongs to one mile. She finished a length behind **QUARANTELLA**, runner-up by a length in a promising debut designed as a prep for this route. **BOLD CONNECTION** finished third in her debut at Lone Star, while wide and racing greenly through the stretch. She should improve second time out.

Fourth Race**1. Butkus****2. Blame George****3. Eleniak**

BUTKUS drops from allowance to \$32k claiming N2L, adds blinkers and makes his first start since being gelded. His races last summer are fast enough for this level. **BLAME GEORGE** was claimed from a respectable third vs. similar in Kentucky. Trainer Robertino Diodoro is a 23-percent trainer f.o.c. the past five years. **ELENIK** crushed maiden-claiming rivals with a good number (80 Beyer). He benefits by the seven-pound apprentice allowance. **CHIPPER** will be rolling late as he drops in class and returns to dirt.

Fifth Race**1. Law Abiding****2. Naismith****3. Explain This Audit**

LAW ABIDING returns to preferred turf footing, dropping from MSW to \$62.5k maiden-claiming. He ran well over the DMR turf last summer in a sprint, two subsequent turf routes were creditable against better than he meets here. **NAISMITH** stretches out and drops for the first time into a maiden-claiming race. He should be positioned among the early leaders. **EXPLAIN THIS AUDIT** raced twice in maiden-claiming turf routes, runner-up both. Logical contender rallying from behind.

Sixth Race**1. Newgate****2. Hard to Figure****3. Game Time**

First-time starters **NEWGATE** and **HARD TO FIGURE** top this 2yo MSW. They worked in company from the gate last weekend, both went well, six furlongs in 1:11.20. **NEWGATE** finished slightly better, he also had to go wide around traffic midway through the work. **HARD TO FIGURE** seemed to have a bit more speed than his mate. Tough to separate the Bob Baffert trainees, either can win first out. **GAME TIME** is a firster by 24-percent debut

juvenile sire Not This Time, from a stable that figures to make an impact with 2yos this summer. ABELIEFINTHISLIVIN finished second in his debut and is eligible to improve.

Seventh Race

1. Commander

2. Chasin Munny

3. Whooping Jay

COMMANDER, off four months, and **CHASIN MUNNY**, off 11 months, get top billing in this N2X/optional \$80k claiming turf sprint. The call is **COMMANDER**, who has been running well against tougher. He won this N2X condition last fall, now entered at the same level for the optional claim tag. The challenge is five furlongs might be shorter than he prefers. **COMMANDER** has also won this condition, also entered for the optional tag returning from a layoff for a trainer whose layoff sprinters (six months) are 4-for-12 since spring. 'MUNNY has won a N1X off a 15-month layoff, so this layoff is no big deal. He also has more tactical speed than the top choice and could get a cozy trip saving ground forwardly placed. **WHOOPING JAY** goes first off the claim for a stable that has had much f.o.c. success over the years. **LANE WAY** will rally from behind; his N1X in his most recent start in October fits with these.

Eighth Race

1. Shaaz

2. Bagboss

3. Principe Carlo

SHAAZ and **BAGBOSS** top this soft edition of the G1 Bing Crosby. **SHAAZ** shortens to six furlongs after an okay third in a G3 mile. Recent team works with G1 winner Country Grammer have been outstanding including a bullet drill here last weekend. Challenging post (2 of 10) for **SHAAZ**, but he will fire and he is fast: 97 Beyer last out, 105 his December debut. **BAGBOSS** arrives from Churchill Downs, where he scored a decisive N2X win. His rivals were nondescript, but **BAGBOSS** was visually impressive and his figures continue to improve. He has speed, and versatility. **PRINCIPE CARLO** did everything but win last out in a G2 at seven furlongs. He dueled through hot fractions, put away his pace rival, fought back and got worn down by perfect-tripper **AMERICAN THEOREM**. Runner-up 'CARLO ran better than the winner. His pattern is the same as 2019 Bing Crosby winner Cistron: fast-pace runner-up in the Triple Bend, cutting back to six furlongs for the Bing. However, the best distance for 'CARLO is 7f. Same with **AMERICAN THEOREM**, who drew outside and will rally late. East Coast shipper **DRAIN THE CLOCK** is speed.

Ninth Race

1. Midnight Jostar

2. Liberal

3. Goliad

MIDNIGHT JOSTAR ran super last out from post 9. He was four- and five-wide start to finish in a similar N1X turf mile at Santa Anita, and missed by a neck. He drew another outside post here (10 of 12), but is a two-time winner on the DMR turf course and should bang out this condition if he gets a more economical trip tucking in and saving ground. **LIBERAL**, a blast-home closer, has two wins and a second in three starts at a mile on turf since being claimed for \$32k last fall by trainer Kristin Mulhall. The gelding drew inside, where he will save ground and kick late. Lightly raced **GOLIAD**, graded-placed on this course as a 2yo, stretches out from a comeback sprint and will set/press the pace. Trouble is, he has pace rivals to his inside and outside. **ONE FAST BRO** is a DMR turf specialist, in the money six times including two wins. He finished slightly more than a length behind the top choice last out, albeit with a ground-saving trip.

Tenth Race

1. Defunded

2. Tripoli

3. Country Grammer

The improving **DEFUNDED** can win the G2 San Diego with an up-front trip. Lightly raced this year with two starts, he might be the pace of the race shortening to 8.5 f off a runner-up finish in a 10f G1. He ran well on this track last summer (N1X romp), and from post 2 will use his speed. Come catch him. **TRIPOLI** ran well in his prep, fourth on turf his first start since he was sidelined by a knee chip. **TRIPOLI** loves Del Mar, runner-up this race last year followed by a win in the Pacific Classic. He can improve second start back. **COUNTRY GRAMMER** is the best horse in the field, first start since an impressive win in the Dubai World Cup. He has trained well, in company with Bing Crosby (race 8) choice Shaaz, but this distance is short for 'GRAMMER, who wants a mile and one-quarter. He will get it in the Pacific Classic. **ROYAL SHIP** misfired last out, he may not have cared for the Santa Anita track finishing third in the Gold Cup. **MANDALOUN** should improve second start back from Saudi.

Eleventh Race

1. Leisurewear

2. Vivando

3. Albayaader

Wide-open turf mile, filly-mare MSW. The tepid choice is **LEISUREWEAR**, whose best U.S. race was a runner-up route on this turf course last fall. She stretches out following disappointing sprint comeback, has tactical to establish position, and finished fairly well here last summer (30.16 final five-sixteenths). **VIVANDO** did not have the greatest of trips any of four starts, but she finished an okay second last out behind Rhea Moon, who returned with a decent third against winners. **VIVANDO** will rally late. **ALBAYAADER** is a must-use, despite post 12. Imported from Europe, her U.S. debut in a turf sprint was better than it looks. She was blocked the length of the lane, and never had a chance to run. That race was six furlongs, this is one mile, which should be okay. What is not okay is the outside draw (post 12).