

Date: August 4th, 2023**Track:** Del Mar**By Brad Free****BEST BET: Beer Can Man (7th race)****First Race****1. Mysticism****2. She Is Romantic****3. Kalifornia K**

Twilight racing on Friday, first post 4 p.m. Two-year-old maiden fillies go five furlongs on turf; first-time starter **MYSTICISM** has trained like she is ready to fire. Sired by War Front and produced by a dam that won her career debut in a turf route, **MYSTICISM** has shown speed in workouts. **SHE IS ROMANTIC** is a well-regarded Blame filly who also has shown promise in the morning. Uncertain if she is cranked for a top effort first out, but she does have natural ability. The top choices are by sires whose 2yo debut progeny have won 10 percent first out, slightly below average. **KALIFORNIA K** lost her chance at the break in her career debut at Los Alamitos. She broke slowly, and finished last. She is believed to have more speed than she showed. Also-eligible **JULIAS DREAM** appears to have worked well for her debut.

Second Race**1. Cocktail Cutie****2. Brookys Gal****3. Moment's Pleasure**

This maiden-50 for Cal-bred 2yo fillies is a good spot to take a shot, hopefully at an overlaid price, with third-time starter **COCKTAIL CUTIE**. She got wiped out at the break in her career debut, and had no shot. Second time out, she was bumped leaving the gate from an inside post, got stuck racing inside and behind horses, and merely went through the motions to finish sixth. Now she drew outside (post 6 of 7), drops in for a \$50k claim tag, and two works since arriving at Del Mar suggest she likes the surface. Tab for a minor upset.

BROOKYS GAL enters with the highest speed figure, a 51 Beyer earned finishing second behind a heavily favored special-weight winner at Pleasanton. 'GAL shows up for a \$50k tag second time out, and drew comfortably outside. **MOMENT'S PLEASURE** is a Clubhouse Ride firster from a stable that typically races maidens into shape rather than fire first time out. But this field is not particularly strong; 'PLEASURE figures as a contender.

Third Race**1. Sunrise Journey****2. High Heater****3. Table for Ten**

Even though all 47 starts by **SUNRISE JOURNEY** have been sprints, the veteran 8yo gets top billing stretching to a route for the first time in his career. He is the controlling speed in this starter allowance turf mile, his recent form is solid, his sprint win last out was deceptively easy, and he is 3-for-3 in non-stakes since being claimed by Librado Barocio. Uncertain if he will stay the trip, but 'JOURNEY is a 16-win pro who should set the pace. If he gets loose and comfortable, he could be gone. If the speed does not stay, this is anyone's race. **HIGH HEATER** returns from the Midwest, where he scored his eighth career victory last out in a starter allowance at Indiana Grand. His tactical speed could lead to a cozy trip positioned second behind the speed. 'HEATER could get first run if the pace falters. **TABLE FOR TEN** is a veteran late-runner who won a maiden race over the DMR turf three summers ago. He is trained by Bill McClean, who also entered 15-win veteran **SHOT OF A LIFETIME**.

Fourth Race**1. Yellow Brick****2. Worcester****3. Confucius**

Career maidens **YELLOW BRICK** (six starts) and **WORCESTER** (seven starts) get top billing in this maiden dirt mile. Neither is trustworthy. **YELLOW BRICK** gets the call, first start since a tough-trip second two months ago on turf. Blinkers off, he has run well on dirt, finished in the money every start, and has a pair of workouts over the DMR track this summer. His dirt figures match or exceed par for this level. Same with **WORCESTER**, odds-on runner-up both recent maiden dirt starts. He finished four lengths clear of third last time, 11 clear of third his previous maiden dirt race. He does not have a recent workout over the DMR track however; he is stabled at Los Alamitos. Victor Espinoza is named to ride **WORCESTER**, as Juan Hernandez moves to the stable's other starter **CONFUCIUS**. The latter merely ran around the track in his sprint debut; two turns is probably what he wants. His odds should be significantly higher than his stablemate. **EXCEL CALCULATOR** moves up to MSW after being claimed from a career-best runner-up finish for \$50k.

Fifth Race**1. Essential Business****2. Cornelia Fort****3. True Patriot**

Two turns is new for **ESSENTIAL BUSINESS**, whose sharp form suggests she can stay the trip first try at a route. She followed a runaway claiming win two back with a solid Cal-bred N1X dirt win last out; and now moves back to turf while stretching out. Her pedigree is fine for one mile. **CORNELIA FORT** has something the top choice lacks. That is, proven form at two turns. She was claimed for \$32k from a relatively fast win at this turf-mile trip, and may handle the bump up into Cal-bred allowance. Also-eligible **TRUE PATRIOT** returns from a three-month break with races that fit with these, but a tough outside post. **SENSIBLE MOVE** finished second last out in a similar spot; **DADDYSRUBY** stretches out following two sprint wins to begin her career.

Sixth Race

1. Bus Buzz

2. Kangaroo Court

3. Giver Not a Taker

The two top 3yo Cal-bred sprinters meet for the third time, perhaps **BUS BUZZ** can turn the tables on nemesis **KANGAROO COURT**. It won't be easy, 'BUZZ finished second twice to his rival. But 'BUZZ drew a post position in the middle of the field, while 'COURT is stuck on the rail. From his midfield post, 'BUZZ can apply outside pressure to his rival. Four starts by 'BUZZ produced two wins and two seconds. **KANGAROO COURT** is back with state-breds for his first start since he misfired in a fast-pace stake at Churchill Downs. Based on his 2-0 advantage over the top choice in head-to-head meetings, the argument could be made 'COURT is simply a better horse. But the inside draw is tough. The first two weeks of the summer meet, the rail was 1-for-30 in dirt sprints (all distances). Same 1-for-30 stat from post 2. Generally speaking, the inside has not been the place to be in dirt sprints. The top pair have similar up-front running styles; if they hook up, the race could unfold for **GIVER NOT A TAKER**, who is two-for-two over the DMR track and will rally from midfield.

Seventh Race

1. Beer Can Man

2. Turn On The Jets

3. Noble Reflection

Stakes winner **BEER CAN MAN** is 3-for-3 over the DMR turf course including two wins at this five-furlong trip. This is his first start since he won a fast turf sprint stakes at Pimlico in May. The pace-pressing gelding is quick enough to be forwardly placed; he can get first run at the likely pacesetter drawn in the outside post. 'MAN is trained by Phil D'Amato, who also entered **TURN ON THE JETS**. The latter is 2-for-2 on turf at DMR, he ran super finishing a troubled fourth in his comeback at Santa Anita. He stumbled and was off slowly, raced in traffic without a clean run, and missed by only one length. Solid comeback despite the fourth-place finish. **NOBLE REFLECTION** is the aforementioned likely pacesetter drawn outside. He won all three California turf sprints this year and finished a creditable fourth in a G2 at Churchill Downs. Sharp gelding in top form the one to catch. **WHATMAKESAMMYRUN** will be rolling late, but five furlongs is shorter than he prefers.

Eighth Race

1. Patron d'Oro

2. Tahoe Secrets

3. Kentucky Bourbon

PATRON D'ORO drops from N1X to \$32k claiming N2L, and enters as simply the fastest in the field on numbers. Second start back from a layoff, he can win with a front-running/pace-pressing trip. From a pari-mutuel perspective however, backing low-odds droppers is not typically a profitable long-term strategy. **TAHOE SECRETS** ran okay in his comeback, and should improve second start back. **KENTUCKY BOURBON** is in from the Midwest, returning to the level at which he was claimed from a runner-up finish three back at CD. **QUICK BUCK** misfired last out, he fits off his third-place comeback two starts back.