

Date: November 12th, 2023**Track:** Del Mar**By Brad Free****BEST BET: Mahina (4th race)****First Race****1. Grazia****2. Affair****3. Air Force Thunder**

The 2yo debut filly **GRAZIA** appears to have trained well, and is bred to win early. Juvenile progeny of Uncle Mo won 14 percent first out; the dam of GRAZIA won her career debut and produced three foals, all winners, including a debut winner. First-time starter **AFFAIR** is by Runhappy, whose juvenile progeny have won first out at an average rate of 11 percent. The gray filly debuts with a solid work pattern, though her dam preferred running long on turf. **AIR FORCE THUNDER** also appears to have trained well for her debut; last-out runner-up GIRL OF MY DREAMS is the only entrant with racing experience. With just five entered in this maiden sprint, wagering value is minimal.

Second Race**1. Table for Ten****2. Zimba Warrior****3. Jamming Eddy**

TABLE FOR TEN stands out in this \$16k claiming starter allowance, based on his last-out N1X win at Golden Gate and third at this class level over the Del Mar turf in summer. His rivals in this small field are mostly sprinters or dirt runners. 'TEN figures to start at a short price for Northern California-based trainer Bill McClean, whose turf-route favorites are 7-for-14 over the past five years according to Formulator. **ZIMBA WARRIOR** is a nine-time winner on dirt (including nighttime races vs. Quarter Horses), but his turf form is uncertain. 'WARRIOR tried turf only once, and misfired. 'WARRIOR was re-claimed from a win last out by Steve Knapp, who won with the gelding in summer 2022. **JAMMING EDDY** stretches out with fast sprint figures. He has a shot to steal it depending on how much pressure is applied by stretch-out RED CROSS KNIGHT. MO REWARDS might be ranked too low; he finished a creditable third last out vs. better.

Third Race**1. Elegant****2. Pacific Rose****3. Flynn's Chance**

ELEGANT bombed as the heavy favorite her first two starts in fast-pace sprints, but now stretches to a mile as the controlling speed. She could be loose setting softer splits; she might be gone. **PACIFIC ROSE** drops from a respectable fourth in a Grade 2. Each start better than the start before, she is the high-figure filly in the field. **FLYNN'S CHANCE** was no match for runaway stablemate Tamara first out in a sprint, but two turns should be more her deal. 'CHANCE is a full sister to graded route winner Moonlight d'Oro. NAFISA, a \$1.8 million yearling, makes her career debut at two turns. She is a stablemate of the top choice.

Fourth Race**1. Mahina****2. Precocious Times****3. Rugelach**

The pick six sequence (\$1 wager, traditional 70-30 split, no jackpot) begins with a N2L starter allowance in which **MAHINA** gets top billing based on her pedigree and impressive maiden-62.5k turf-mile win last out. She ran faster each successive quarter-mile, won going away, and has finally put it all together. Her dam Malibu Pier was a three-time graded winner long on turf; MAHINA enters fall in peak form with room to improve after just six starts. This field has plenty of speed to flatter her rally. The pace scenario also benefits **PRECOCIOUS TIMES**, who finished in the money every start following her maiden win four back. 'TIMES will be rolling late, while **RUGELACH** is probably best of the speed. She led to deep stretch last time and got collared. Two who finished behind her won next time out. The challenge for RUGELACH is pace. At least two others have speed: TICKLE MY FANCY and ROPERS N WRANGLERS.

Fifth Race**1. Take Caramie****2. Tiff With Jimmy****3. Unkept Secret**

TAKE CARAMIE drops from Cal-bred maiden special-weight to maiden-20, switches to dirt, drew an outside post, adds blinkers, and showed enough run in her first two starts to suggest she can handle this bunch from the outside post. This is her first start on dirt; she has worked well on dirt. **TIFF WITH JIMMY** did not have a visible alibi finishing fourth as the odds-on favorite last out in a similar race at SA, but she ran well over the DMR track in summer and gets Flavien Prat. **UNKEPT SECRET** will be rolling from behind. She is a

contender based on her runner-up effort last out. CHEVY GIRL drops back to the maiden-20 level of her best finish, in May. She needed her recent comeback vs. Cal-bred maiden-50s; she can improve second start back.

Sixth Race

1. Book Smart

2. Colt Fiction

3. Bag's Gold

Only six entered this Cal-bred allowance sprint; a case can be made for most in the field. **BOOK SMART** moves up in class following a highly rated N3L win from which he was claimed for \$20k. He won by five lengths setting a fast pace, precisely how he won his previous start. Drawn outside this time, possibly the speed of the field, he can be long gone. **COLT FICTION** is a five-time winner on DMR dirt who showed signs of returning to form last out when third in a similar Cal-bred N1X. He moves from post 1 to post 5, and has speed to keep the top choice in his sights. **BAG'S GOLD**, Bob Hess Jr.-trained stablemate of the top choice, fits off his runaway N2L claiming win two back. He misfired his most recent start two months ago, but is "protected" by running back in a statebred allowance from which he cannot be claimed. The placement signals optimism; 'GOLD ran the fastest race of his career over this track. For what it's worth, he was a vet scratch Oct. 7. **MINISTER SHANE** will roll from behind, though his best races have been on turf.

Seventh Race

1. American Hope

2. El Rey Rey

3. Bandwagon

Maiden 2yos **AMERICAN HOPE** and **EL REY REY**, third and fourth with trouble first out, are likely to improve second time out stretching from a turf sprint to a turf route. **AMERICAN HOPE** ran particularly well finishing third. He was rated early, saved ground, rallied inside, steadied in midstretch, and finished with run. Sired by American Pharoah and produced by a multiple Grade 1-winning route mare, 'HOPE should relish two turns. **EL REY REY** ran well in the same race. He was blocked and steadied into the lane, angled outside, finished well and galloped out big. Solid debut, he also benefits by the longer two-turn distance. **BANDWAGON** earned a big number (77 Beyer) finishing second in a turf mile at Woodbine while five lengths clear of third. The knock is five runners from that race ran back since, and none hit the board. **TRIBAL** inched forward second out, a respectable fourth. He seems to be gradually improving.

Eighth Race

1. Chancery Way

2. Carmen Miranda

3. Glorious Spring

Consistently reliable Northern California-based **CHANCERY WAY** gets the call in this Cal-bred sprint stakes for fillies and mares, shortening to a sprint for her first start since finishing third in a turf route in August. The 5-for-10 dual stakes winner worked well for her comeback according to trainer Jamey Thomas, the filly's numbers are highest in the field, and she is quick enough to establish a forward position from the inside post. The rail is not a deal-breaker at seven furlongs during the DMR fall meet: the inside post is 12-for-73 (16 percent) since DMR autumn racing began in 2014. All systems go for the Mr. Big filly, who can win with a front-running or pace-pressing trip. **CARMEN MIRANDA** returns to dirt after a series of creditable efforts on turf. She also handles dirt, and from her post near the outside, she figures for a pace-pressing trip lapped on the top choice. **GLORIOUS SPRING** is back with Cal-bred fillies and mares after she raced wide and split the field against unrestricted colts and geldings at Fresno. A deep closer likely to be positioned last early, she will be flying late under Prat, who won this stakes race five of the last six years. **ROSE DAWSON** benefits from a surface switch to dirt.

Ninth Race

1. Soulmate

2. Cali Bay

3. Taishan

SOULMATE returns to the DMR turf on which he ran well twice in summer: a close seventh in an entry-level allowance, and third in a restricted \$32k claiming race. Both earned numbers high enough to win this \$25k claiming turf mile. **SOULMATE** was overmatched last out at SA; he pressed and tired in a N1X won by next-out graded winner Seal Team. This claiming field is easier, **SOULMATE** also benefits by the shorter one-mile distance. **CALI BAY** won over the DMR course in summer, and ran even better last out at SA finishing third at this level while running faster each successive quarter-mile (:24.60, :24.56, :23.14, and :23.08). Logical contender for a productive trainer-jockey combo; Phil D'Amato and Prat were 6-for-13 at the 2022 fall meet, and teamed with a host of live mounts opening week of the 2023 fall meet. **TAISHAN** finished only a length behind the top choice when they met over this course in summer. **NAUVOO** is speed, first off the claim and trying turf for the first time. Longshot theft?