

Date: December 2nd, 2023**Track:** Del Mar**By Brad Free****BEST BET: Program Trading (7th race)****First Race****1. Kerry Gold****2. Andy Can U Hear Me****3. Talklessworkmore**

Vastly improved **KERRY GOLD** will be tough in this Cal-bred allowance turf mile after two sharp wins from three recent turf routes at Golden Gate. Purchased privately and transferred to SoCal trainer Peter Miller following his most recent win, 'GOLD enters as the deserving choice. **ANDY CAN U HEAR ME** stretches back to the mile distance and Del Mar turf on which he scored a maiden win in summer. His runner-up sprint last out was solid. **TALKLESSWORKMORE** was compromised by strategy last out. He lost ground with a premature move on the far turn, made the lead in the lane, and tired. He has tried this Cal-bred N1X turf level six times, five times in the money. **WINE AND WHISKY** is eligible to improve returning to grass. Both turf starts this summer in Northern California were highly rated.

Second Race**1. Miss Commander****2. Unkept Secret****3. Ipanema Girl**

MISS COMMANDER ran the best race of her career last out, runner-up in a similar maiden-20 sprint. If she repeats that effort, she can handle this soft field. The challenge, however, is a post-position switch from the outside. She lost ground last out, but was always in the clear. Now she breaks from an inside post (2 of 6). Uncertain if she will be as effective inside, but the additional furlong of this six and one-half furlong race should be okay. **UNKEPT SECRET**, meanwhile, does not benefit by the longer distance. She shortened stride noticeably last out, tiring to fourth in the same race as the top choice. Visually, it was not great. Based on her upper-50s figures, she fits. **IPANEMA GIRL** returns to a sprint after finding two turns too far; **LUCKY VEGAS** is racing for the first time at the bottom class level, with a 10-pound apprentice allowance.

Third Race**1. Lane Way****2. Daniel's Magic****3. Turn On The Jets**

Although five furlongs is shorter than preferred for **LANE WAY** and improving **DANIEL'S MAGIC**, they nonetheless are the choices in this turf stakes. **LANE WAY** ran well at this abbreviated trip in 2022. His only start at the distance this year was a comeback prep. He is G2-placed, finished in the exacta eight of nine since being gelded, and has enough natural speed to be forwardly placed in a race with a murky pace scenario. **DANIEL'S MAGIC** is compromised by pace and distance, but there is no denying his sharp form. He was gelded early this year and enters off the two best performances of his career: N1X upset two back, open allowance upset last out. 'MAGIC will rally late, possibly at a price. **TURN ON THE JETS**, winner of this stakes race last year and 3-for-4 going five furlongs at DMR, had a tough trip last time. He finished third after being blocked on the turn and into the lane. He found clear sailing too late. A true horse-for-course, 'JETS will roll from midpack. **UNCONQUERABLE KEEN** won the race in which **TURN ON THE JETS** had the trouble.

Fourth Race**1. Ghost of Midnight****2. Jefe de Obra****3. Disco Ball**

Runner-up in a highly rated N1X sprint last out, lightly raced **GHOST OF MIDNIGHT** enters as the fastest in the field. He was no match for \$3.55 million colt Hejazi, but finished far clear of third and earned a figure close enough to par. The only DMR start by 'MIDNIGHT' was a decisive maiden-claiming win. **JEFE DE OBRA** is speed, making his second U.S. start after a runner-up finish at Keeneland. He ran super in defeat. He dueled, shook off multiple pace rivals who finished nowhere, and got collared late. Three DMR workouts by 'OBRA indicate he handles the surface; he could be gone. **DISCO BALL**, entered for the optional \$40k claim tag, will keep the pace honest. His last-out runner-up finish was exceptionally fast based on speed figures.

Fifth Race**1. Lady de Berry****2. Go With Gusto****3. Mo Fox Givin**

LADY DE BERRY has much to prove jumping from maiden win to G3 turf mile, but this 2yo filly stakes was won three of the last four years by last-start maiden winners. Chad Brown trains 'BERRY, who improved second time out moving to turf. She won a Keeneland

maiden route going away. The lightly raced filly is expected to continue her upward pattern; her figure suggests she won't need much improvement to handle these. **GO WITH GUSTO** had a compromising trip finishing second against boys in a Breeders' Cup undercard stakes. She was blocked into the lane, remained blocked to the middle of the stretch, then finished well inside. Good effort by 'GUSTO, whose previous start was a third vs. boys in a G1 at Woodbine. This is her first start against fillies, she switches to jockey Tyler Gaffione and looms a contender from off the pace. **MO FOX GIVIN** finished third in the BC undercard race; she ran super. She lost ground four-wide early, pressed the pace to deep stretch, then got swallowed in a race dominated by late-runners. 'GIVIN was the only front-runner to stick around. She is likely to adopt a more effective strategy this time. Look for her to take back, and rally late. **CIRCLE OF TRUST** might be listed too low; her maiden "win" (disqualified and placed second) was solid.

Sixth Race

1. Imagination

2. Tapalo

3. British Isles

IMAGINATION stretches to a maiden dirt route following a creditable runner-up debut. He did not break well, chased his winning stablemate, and finished more than four clear of third. Two turns should be fine; he is a sibling to G3 route winner Occult. **TAPALO** stretches out with two sprints under his belt. He is moving up in class to maiden special-weight after a runner-up finish in a restricted maiden race, but he could be the speed of the field. **BRITISH ISLES**, stablemate to the top choice, is supposed to be better than the double-digit defeats his first two starts. One more chance at two turns? Sired by Justify, he is a sibling to G1 route winner Eight Rings.

Seventh Race

1. Program Trading

2. Redistricting

3. Webslinger

East Coast shippers get top billing in the G1 Hollywood Derby: class-proven **PROGRAM TRADING** and upset candidate **REDISTRICITING**. The call is the class. **PROGRAM TRADING** won a G1 in summer at Saratoga to go three-for-three, then ran even better next out for second in a highly rated G3 at Colonial Downs. 'TRADING was used early from the outside, chased a fast pace, and got worn down. The race was productive: winner Integration crushed a G2 next out; third place Runway Storm won a G3 next out. The main foe for 'TRADING is lightly raced stablemate **REDISTRICITING**, who has an alibi for his one defeat from three starts. He lost a shoe finishing far back in the G1 Belmont Derby. He returned with a decisive N1X allowance win designed as a prep for this race. Unproven against top company in the afternoon, he reportedly trains in the morning like a top horse. Brown won this G1 race three of the last five years he had a runner. **WEBSLINGER** is the top horse out of the G2 Twilight Derby at Santa Anita. He finished third, but was best considering ground loss. He was four- and five-wide the far turn, finished super, and missed by a half-length. He ran better than winner **SEAL TEAM** and runner-up **SILVER KNOTT**, who are both in this field. **WEBSLINGER**, in his previous start, finished second to top choice **PROGRAM TRADING**.

Eighth Race

1. Des Doigts

2. Salsation

3. Eligio

DES DOIGTS should be tough in this dirt starter for 2yos, returning to the DMR track on which he won a maiden-claiming race by more than eight lengths in summer. He was subsequently overmatched three starts (two stakes, N1X allowance), but is back where he fits and a potential pacesetter in a sprint with little true speed. Come catch him. **SALSATION** also gets class relief after finishing tenth in a \$175k Cal-bred stakes. He placed in a \$75k stakes at Albuquerque two back, and ran well at DMR in summer. Similar to the top choice, he has enough gas to be forwardly placed. **ELIGIO** misfired last out at Santa Anita, but his runner-up finishes twice over the DMR track in summer give him a look. He is still a maiden, but that is no big deal at this level. His speed figures in summer make him a contender.

Ninth Race

1. Sea Dancer

2. Pink Whitney

3. Muri

SEA DANCER drops into a maiden race after finishing midpack in a \$487k stakes at Kentucky Downs. A sibling to stakes winner Johannes, 'DANCER gets Flavien Prat for her California debut and enters as arguably the "best horse" in this turf mile for maiden fillies. **PINK WHITNEY** produced the best finish of her career last out, third with a final quarter-mile in :23.15 over this course. All three DMR turf starts at one mile were decent. First-time starter **MURI** has a pedigree and connections that command respect. The filly is a sibling to 2020 Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf winner Aunt Pearl; trainer Michael McCarthy is 4-for-8 this year with debut 2yos in turf routes. **GOLDEN GHOST** is speed, running for the first time on "firm" after fading in a pair of maiden races on slow courses labelled "good." She might be the one to catch, and might be listed too low.