

Date: July 25th, 2024**Track:** Del Mar**By Brad Free****BEST BET: Reincarnate (7th race)****First Race****1. Granada Flavor****2. Zimba Warrior****3. Never Seen Before**

GRANADA FLAVOR and **ZIMBA WARRIOR** top this \$8k claiming route. Although the recent starts by **GRANADA FLAVOR** were only okay (second, third, fourth), those races were against much better company. Runner-up both previous starts on Del Mar dirt, 'FLAVOR is merely the tepid choice. **ZIMBA WARRIOR** was re-claimed by trainer Bob Hess Jr. last out from a disappointing fourth for \$12.5k. He drops two class levels, has won twice over the DMR surface, and will be rolling late. **NEVER SEEN BEFORE** returns from a two-month break while dropping to the bottom claiming level. He benefits by a weight break under a seven-pound apprentice rider. For what it's worth, the main track opening weekend was decidedly pro-speed.

Second Race**1. Mr. Machupicchu****2. A Votre Sante****3. Giant Luther**

Front-running dropper **MR. MACHUPICCHU** is the one to catch in this maiden-50 sprint for Cal-bred 2yos. He set/pressed the pace both recent starts vs. special-weight state-breds, finishing second and third. This field is easier. From the inside post, 'MACHUPICCHU must use his speed. Gate to wire? Probably, if the main track continues to favor speed. **A VOTRE SANTE** improved second out; runner-up with an up-front trip. He figures to be forwardly placed outside the top choice, and might get first run if the pacesetter falters. **GIANT LUTHER** finished an okay third in his debut, and is likely to improve second out/first-time gelding. Peter Miller-trained second-start maidens (all levels) won 40 of 155 (26 percent) the past five years according to Formulator. The point is, 'LUTHER should move forward with a race under his belt. **SMILING MIKE** is a first-time starter from a dam whose four runners all fired in their debut: two winners, two runners-up. **KANGAROO COAST** is a firster by new sire Bodexpress (debut progeny 2-for-8). 'COAST is a sibling to Cal-bred stakes winner Kangaroo Court. **EL ONDEADO** missed by a neck last out while finishing six clear of third.

Third Race**1. She's Got a Way****2. Aventapp****3. Paleo's Princess**

The pick six begins with a \$144,919 carryover; this is the first leg of the \$1 wager. **SHE'S GOT A WAY** gets the nod in this \$32k filly-mare claiming turf sprint. Freshened two months, dropping off a runner-up finish for \$40k, she is returning to the course on which she scored her most recent win a year ago. She has enough speed to be forwardly placed right behind the leaders (turf rails at 24 feet). **AVENTAPP** is a consistent veteran who won 3 of her last 5, and though she finished out of the money four previous DMR turf starts (three sprints), she finished a respectable third last out and is in arguably the best form of her career. From the inside post, she figures for a tucked-in trip saving ground just off the pace. **PALEO'S PRINCESS** was compromised by a wide trip finishing directly behind **AVENTAPP** last out. Trouble is, 'PRINCESS could end up with a similarly wide trip here from post 8. **RECENTO ROMPERE** drops from N2X; **ADAAY IN ASIA** will be running late, though five furlongs could be too short.

Fourth Race**1. Canada Gate****2. Visceral****3. Winterfell**

Runner-up by nine lengths last out behind promising maiden winner Pony Express, **CANADA GATE** gets the call in his second route. He has speed for an up-front trip, he posted a fast recent work (:59.60) over the DMR track, and should make a forward move second start back/second-time route. **VISCERAL** stretches out from a respectable fourth-place debut in a highly rated sprint. Sired by Violence, he benefits by the longer distance; trainer Mark Glatt won with 6 of his last 22 maidens sprint to dirt route (3 for 4 with second-time starters). **WINTERFELL**, Bob Baffert-trained stablemate of the top choice, figures as a contender off his fast in-the-money finishes two and three starts back. He misfired last time with a wide trip; he switches to jockey Kazushi Kimura. **INDISPENSABLE**, in the money 6 of 8, will be grinding late. **BATTLE CRUISER** finished seven lengths clear of third last time when runner-up in a restricted maiden race.

Fifth Race**1. Mirinda****2. Quick Kate****3. Baby Kristen**

This N1X for turf-sprint fillies and mares is a scramble. Comebacker **MIRINDA** is the tepid choice adding Lasix and switching to turf for her first start since April. She can win if she can run back to her debut last summer when she crushed maiden 2yos by more than six lengths on dirt. Although she misfired twice since, she appears to have trained well for her comeback and could get a good trip positioned second behind the speedster on her inside. If and when that rival falters, **MIRINDA** can get first run. If the pace falls apart, late-runner **QUICK KATE** could get there. She ran super finishing second in her turf-sprint debut here in December, and she placed in three age-restricted Calbred allowance races following her second-start maiden route win. 'KATE will be flying late, though deep closers win less frequently when the turf rails are at this 24-foot configuration. **BABY KRISTEN**, aforementioned speedster, is pure heat. A nine-time winner from 23 starts, the challenge facing 'KRISTIN is footing. Five starts on turf produced only one runner-up finish. Nonetheless, the front-running win machine will take them as far as she can. Even though forwardly placed runners generally have an advantage with the rails at 24 feet, last summer only 1 of 11 turf sprints at the configuration were won by the pacesetter.

Sixth Race

1. Ocasek

2. Antibes

3. Sir Rock

A class drop from maiden-40 to maiden-20 benefits **OCASEK**, who stretches from a sprint to a route second start following a long layoff. He ran races last year that would bury this field. **ANTIBES** also drops. Claimed from a maiden-50 last out, he shows up for maiden-20 and stretches back to two turns. The challenge is footing. A nine-start maiden, this is the first dirt start for **ANTIBES**. **SIR ROCK** faced better in Kentucky; this is his first start in California.

Seventh Race

1. Reincarnate

2. Salesman

3. Midnight Mammoth

The class of the field with the top figures, **REINCARNATE** looks tough to beat in this G3 mile and one-half dirt stakes. The front-runner/presser faces easier after finishing second in a G2 at a mile and one-quarter; he benefits by this longer distance and has a pressing style to make his own trip outside two pace rivals. He won his only previous DMR dirt start as a juvenile. Next stop, Pacific Classic? **SALESMAN**, whose only previous dirt marathon was a G2 blowout by more than eight lengths, has been freshened since a misfire four months ago. He has trained exceptionally well, and benefits by the longer distance. **MIDNIGHT MAMMOTH** is one of the aforementioned front-runners. 'MAMMOTH moves up following a pair of wins vs. easier; he should contest the pace and his figures are within range of the top choice. Rail-drawn **CALM SEA** adds pace.

Eighth Race

1. Nation

2. Oscar Joy

3. Quality Wins

Based on his wide-trip runner-up debut in a similar turf mile last fall at Keeneland, comeback gelding **NATION** is the one to beat in this maiden turf mile. **NATION** ran fairly well in his debut, despite racing greenly and losing ground most of the trip. The winner returned two starts later to finish third in an allowance, the 3-4 finishers subsequently won maiden races in later starts. The point is, **NATION** faced a decent field. Now he makes his first start since October for new trainer Michael McCarthy. **OSCAR JOY** broke slowly first time out in a turf sprint, but ran well to finish second. Sired by Oscar Performance and produced by a Curlin mare, 'JOY figures to appreciate two turns. **QUALITY WINS** is the high-figure entrant, though the 5yo is beginning to look like a career maiden. This is his seventh start. He finished second both comeback sprints, and now stretches out. **SWEET ODYSSEY** split the field in his one-turn sprint debut. He is bred for two turns.