

**Date:** August 1st, 2024**Track:** Del Mar**By Brad Free****BEST BET: I'm Still in It (3rd race)****First Race****1. Naples Gal****2. Supa Speed****3. Madonna of Loreto**

Maiden 2yo fillies sprint on turf; first-timer **NAPLES GAL** gets the call. Sired by War Front (11 percent wins debut 2yos, just average), 'GAL has shown speed in the morning. Her dam produced two runners (both ran second in their debut). 'GAL may come out firing for trainer Richard Mandella. **SUPA SPEED**, trained by John Sadler, is a rookie by multi-surface stallion Justify (20 percent wins debut 2yos). 'SPEED is the first runner from an American Pharoah turf mare. 'SPEED worked well in company, and should rally late. But two turns will be more to her liking. **MADONNA OF LORETO** has worked well at Los Alamitos. The debut filly is by Caravaggio (14 percent wins debut 2yos per Formulator); her dam was a Group 1 winner on turf in South America. But similar to SUPA SPEED, expectations are 'LORETO will do better at longer than this five-furlong trip. Florida shipper SOPHISTRY finished a respectable second in her debut at Gulfstream; she can improve. Also-eligible TWIRLING LIGHT is a \$600k juvenile purchase sired by Twirling Candy. If she draws in, she will break from a disadvantageous outside post.

**Second Race****1. Bright Leaf****2. It's My House****3. Leyas Candy**

Although he is a late-runner on a track that was mostly pro-speed the first two weeks, **BRIGHT LEAF** is the choice in a \$32k claiming dirt mile that should unfold at a solid pace. 'LEAF defeated similar two back; he did not have a great trip last out at LRC. He has run well over the Del Mar dirt (3 seconds), and benefits by an apparent abundance of pace. The knock is the speed-friendly track profile. 8 of the 11 dirt routes the first two weeks were won by horses positioned one-two early, while 3 winners rallied from midpack. **IT'S MY HOUSE** returned to form last out with a front-running win for \$25k. He set a strong pace and kept running for his sixth career win. Now that he has returned to top form, he could go back up the ladder. However, he must cope with stretch-out sprinter **LEYAS CANDY**, who has won running long and might be quicker than 'HOUSE. **AMERICAN FARMER** and **MOBOU** are sharp shippers from Northern California who warrant a closer look. Lots of contenders in this field.

**Third Race****1. I'm Still in It****2. One Arrow****3. Girrcanthelpit**

**I'M STILL IN IT** looks like a low-odds winner stretching to a mile against slow opponents after an okay runner-up sprint in her first try at the bottom \$20k maiden-claiming level. I'M STILL IN IT has run well around two turns, she has speed for an up-front trip. She is simply the fastest horse in the field and on paper a standout at a short price. **ONE ARROW** drops to the bottom for the first time, for her first start in five months. She faced much better on turf and synthetic her first five starts; her turf speed figures put her in the hunt in this dirt route. **GIRLCANTHELPI**, habitually "off slow," goes long on dirt for the first time, first time at the bottom class level. Not sure about two turns for her, but this field came up relatively shallow.

**Fourth Race****1. Just Nails****2. Gem Mine****3. Headed for Om**

Runner-up her last three N1X turf sprints, **JUST NAILS** is due. She did not have a good trip her most recent start; 'NAILS was intimidated by traffic at the quarter pole, and by the time she got clear, pacesetter Itzel was gone. 'NAILS has more speed than she showed either of her last two starts, she won a turf sprint at DMR last summer, and gets the call to win with a pressing trip. **GEM MINE**, runner-up both previous DMR N1X turf sprints, returns from an eight-month layoff for trainer Richard Baltas, whose comebackers typically are ready to fire (23 percent wins, off six months, past five years per Formulator). GEM MINE has a up-front pressing style that matches the turf-sprint profile this summer. All systems go, first start back. **HEADED FOR OM** misfired in a starter allowance last out, but her Cal-bred N1X win two back gives her a look against open company. **EXCELIA** finished a close third both recent starts in similar races at slightly longer distances than this five-furlong dash.

**Fifth Race****1. Sing a Happy Song****2. Champagne Camie****3. Slam Diego**

Northern California speedster **SING A HAPPY SONG** is the one to catch in this N3L claiming sprint for fillies and mares. She looks like the speed of the speed, the switch to dirt is fine for a filly sired by Stanford. Come and catch her. **CHAMPAGNE CAMIE** also is unproven on dirt, but her pedigree is acceptable for the switch; she has run well against similar on turf including a decisive N2L \$25k claiming win two back. She could tuck into a cozy trip saving ground behind the abundant speed. DMR horse-for-course **SLAM DIEGO** returns from a layoff of nearly one year, while employing the "ineligible-to-be-claimed" waiver. That is typically an optimistic move. 'DIEGO won over this track each of the last two summers. She'll be running late. Comebacker **ANYBODY'S CHOICE** adds speed.

### Sixth Race

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#### 1. Pioneer Prince

#### 2. Tribal

#### 3. Baldoro

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**PIONEER PRINCE** drops to \$32k claiming N2L following two forgivable losses vs. better. He was blocked the length of the lane two starts back; he broke poorly and did not care for the dirt last out. Now he meets easier, returns to preferred footing (turf) and can win with a pressing trip. **TRIBAL** ran the best race of his career last out, winning a maiden-50 turf mile from which he was claimed. It is slightly curious he shows up for a \$32k tag first off the claim, but based on figures, he is realistically placed. **BALDORO** is a pace-presser in top form; third last out vs. similar in a race dominated by the one-two pacesetters. **WHAT A DUDE** was compromised by the speed-friendly flow in the same race. His close fourth two back at a mile and one-eighth puts him in the picture.

### Seventh Race

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#### 1. Loretta Lynn

#### 2. Smiling Lady

#### 3. Illhaveanotherkiss

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**LORETTA LYNN** scratched from the Fleet Treat Stakes last week for this Cal-bred N1X dirt mile. Good decision, she can win if she reels in front-runner **SMILING LADY**. Lightly raced **LORETTA LYNN**, a 3yo vs. older, ran well both previous dirt routes; second in a stakes route last year, and third last out in a similar Cal-bred stakes. 'LYNN has a solid work pattern for her first start in two months, she is proven at two turns, and has a forwardly placed style. But five-time winner **SMILING LADY**, a front-runner, arrives from Northern California in top form. She won a N1X/optional claiming dirt route last out over a field that included two next-out winners. Although potentially compromised by other speed, she is a pro. Her 0-for-3 record over the DMR track is not a concern. She was overmatched all three stakes; her odds were 15-1, 60-1 and 34-1. **ILLHAVEANOTHERKISS** and **NANCI GRIFFITH** have the same front-running style. **ILLHAVEANOTHERKISS** tries dirt after winning a Cal-bred N1X on turf. She'll be forwardly placed. **DENDERA** was claimed for \$25k last out by trainer Craig Dollase, whose summer meet is off to a big start including a double-digit G3 romp last week by Midnight Mammoth.

### Eighth Race

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#### 1. Red Cross Knight

#### 2. Clooney

#### 3. Enjoy It Strait

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**RED CROSS KNIGHT** faces a problematic pace rival to his inside, but the 5-for-12 pro merits horse-to-beat status based on his sharp current form that includes a highly rated runner-up finish on dirt last time out and a Cal-bred N1X turf win two back. This turf mile is a \$16k claiming starter, so 'KNIGHT is facing easier. If he can somehow avoid a pace duel, he can win with an up-front trip. Otherwise, **CLOONEY** could be along in time. **CLOONEY** scratched from the G3 Cougar II last week to go here; the abundance of pace flatters his closing style. The uncertainty is turf, although he ran okay finishing fourth on turf last year. **ENJOY IT STRAIT** is a 9-for-20 pro who runs short and long, and runs over all three surfaces. He figures for a pressing trip, while **LAW ABIDING** is the aforementioned pace rival for top choice **RED CROSS KNIGHT**.