

Date: November 3rd, 2024**Track:** Del Mar**By Brad Free****BEST BET: Shuangxi (1st race)****First Race****1. Shuangxi****2. Imaboutago****3. Ivory Moon**

Normalcy returns to Del Mar on Sunday, first post 12:30. There is lots of speed in this N2X turf sprint, which is fine for comeback filly **SHUANGXI**. She showed promise this spring in the East; recent workouts suggest she is ready to fire first start in California for new trainer Jeff Mullins, in particular her Oct. 28 drill on the synthetic training track at Santa Anita. She was held up behind a maiden work rival, and blew her away late. If she rations her speed similarly in this turf sprint, from the outside post, she can reel in the speed. Lightly raced **IMABOUTAGO** returns from a layoff of nearly six months. She runs well fresh (debut winner, layoff winner); her spring misfire as the favorite in a Kentucky stakes race was vs. a good field. The one-two finishers later won stakes; the third-place finisher won next out and is stakes-placed. The challenge for **IMABOUTAGO** is that she is speed, sandwiched between two speeds. **IVORY MOON** drew directly inside and adds heat, though she could tuck into a cozy trip just off. **ITZEL**, a recent scratch for \$40k claiming, will press the pace.

Second Race**1. Que Bella Luna****2. I'm Still in It****3. Spirit Rules**

Second-time starter **QUE BELLA LUNA** drops to the bottom for her comeback, which makes sense considering she finished dead last in her career debut vs. Cal-bred maiden-50s in summer. She was well-bet at 5.80-1 and misfired with no visible alibi. Against this soft maiden-20, she deserves a second chance notwithstanding a recent gap in recorded works. **I'M STILL IN IT** is likely to vie for favoritism, but after losing both recent starts as the odds-on favorite, the seven-start maiden can hardly be trusted. She is second preference, because this field came up weak. **SPIRIT RULES** has some speed, this race is only five and one-half furlongs and **RULES** will be racing at the bottom for the first time.

Third Race**1. Lolo Le Plume****2. Gathered****3. Lee's Baby Girl**

LOLO LE PLUME is better than her first two starts; the blinkers-on filly can upset this maiden turf mile. In her career debut, she lagged at the back, finished well and galloped out in front. But in her second start, she sputtered with no visible alibi. Now blinkers go on, she switches to hustling jockey Edwin Maldonado, and can post a minor surprise with a more forwardly placed trip. **GATHERED** ships to the West Coast following a respectable third-by-a-neck finish at Laurel. Sired by Collected and a sibling to a graded stakes winner, **GATHERED** is likely to improve second-time long. **LEE'S BABY GIRL** is a six-start maiden with four seconds and a third. She is speed, probably the one to catch. **SLICK** finished second in a 13-runner field in her debut in Ireland; this is her first start in the U.S. The race she exits turned out to be non-productive, but her trainer has a long record of success with European imports.

Fourth Race**1. Saltwater Cowboy****2. J B Strikes Back****3. Demotivate**

SALTWATER COWBOY finished more than four lengths behind stablemate **J B STRIKES BACK** in a similar N2L starter at Santa Anita, but the effort by **COWBOY** was better than his fifth-place finish. He lost ground, uncorked a wide rally on the far turn and blew past his rail-skimming stablemate, then sputtered in deep stretch. The maiden-40 win two back by **COWBOY** was over the DMR surface he clearly likes, and if he runs back to that win, he should handle this field. **J B STRIKES BACK** is okay, his last-out fourth was the best race of his career. He fits as one of the favorites. **DEMOTIVATE** rallied from behind to finish second in the same race the top pair exits. Each start better than the start before, he will be rolling from behind.

Fifth Race**1. Nashoba's Joy****2. Russells Hustle****3. Hot Legs Romolo**

NASHOBA'S JOY drops to the bottom class level for turf horses, \$25k claiming non-winners of two, with top figures. His starter allowance runner-up on DMR turf in summer would be fast enough. **RUSSELLS HUSTLE** is realistically spotted for his first vs. winners following a decisive maiden-50 victory in the 18th start of his career. The light bulb finally went on; no reason he cannot be competitive

right back. **HOT LEGS ROMOLO**, runner-up by a neck last out at nine furlongs, might benefit by the cutback to one mile. Although the pace of shorter races often comes up quicker than longer races, there is not much speed signed on in this field. 'ROMOLO could get a similar up-front trip in a race that could unfold at a tepid clip. MCGREGOR LAKE drops to the bottom turf level for the first time. He has shown hints of ability against state-bred company, and probably fits at this level.

Sixth Race

1. Hothead

2. Riding By

3. Whiskyginandbrandy

HOTHEAD may or may not be a bust. His off-slow debut two back was excusable, but he disappointed without a visible alibi his next out. He simply chased a hot pace and backed up. He was subsequently gelded, and meets a field with less heat. One more chance in a shallow Cal-bred maiden race. First-time starter **RIDING BY** has posted a handful of fast workouts; his trainer has been effective recently with first-time starters. George Papaprodromou won with four of his last 10 firsters. **WHISKYGINANDBRANDY** is likely to be forwardly placed, but with five starts under his belt he has not shown much improvement. He is back on dirt after a midpack finish on turf. **CANDY CRUSHER** drops in to face Cal-breds after a modest fifth in a restricted maiden race.

Seventh Race

1. Mizzyaan

2. Moment's Pleasure

3. Ketonia

The impressive maiden victory last out by **MIZZYAAN** stamps her the choice in this entry-level allowance for 3yo filly turf milers. **MIZZYAAN** blew the field away by more than three lengths, she is lightly raced and bred to be a good one. She is by Justify, and produced by multiple G1 winner Vale Dori. **MOMENT'S PLEASURE** returns to the DMR turf course on which she won a Cal-bred allowance and Cal-bred stakes during the summer meet. Her third-place disappointment two back was due to a wide trip; she tried older stakes company last time and finished sixth. Now she drops to N1X for 3yo fillies and returns to her preferred course. **KETONIA** also ran well over the course in summer, starter allowance win and N1X third. She returns from a two-month break and will be rolling late. **WORD PLAY** makes her U.S. debut and first start of the year while adding Lasix.

Eighth Race

1. Lettheliquortalk

2. Mr. Dreamcycle

3. Midnight Love

Class dropper **LETTHELIQUORTALK** got cooked in a pace duel against older last out on turf, but now drops into a claiming dirt sprint for 3yos and looks like the speed of the field. At five and one-half furlongs, he can be long gone. **MR. DREAMCYCLE** returns from a seven-month layoff with speed for a pressing trip and proven ability over the DMR track. **MIDNIGHT LOVE** was re-claimed two back by Hector Palma, who trained the gelding for his three career wins early this year. **CHASING RAIN** is in good form, making a parallel class move to 3yo claiming after a runner-up finish a N2L claiming for older.

Ninth Race

1. Shezmisbehaving

2. Sassy Prancelot

3. Ashleys Sandcastle

The promising third-place comeback by **SHEZMISBEHAVING** sets her up as a logical choice in this Cal-bred N1X turf mile. She had been off more than four months when she returned, and ran faster each subsequent quarter-mile (24.53, 24.30, 23.87, 23.61) but the one-two finishers were forwardly placed fillies who did not back up. With a prep under her belt, 'BEHAVING can rally for the win. **SASSY PRANCELOT** stretches out for the first time. She faces other speed in this field, but the fractions are sure to be softer than she faced in sprints. **ASHLEYS SANDCASTLE** will pick them up late. **SATELLITE HEART** finished second last out at this level, more than two lengths in front of the top choice.