

Date: November 17th, 2024**Track:** Del Mar**By Brad Free****BEST BET: Rashmi (9th race)****First Race****1. Gem Mine****2. With Love****3. Long Mayshe Reign**

GEM MINE returns to a turf sprint after taking a shot and fading in a route. It turns out she is less effective running long; she set the pace and was swallowed. But her turf sprints are decent, including a creditable fourth at Del Mar this summer and a runner-up at DMR last fall. Both were entry-level allowance; this N2L starter field is easier. She has speed for a pressing trip just off the pace, and based on her route race nine days ago she is plenty fit. **WITH LOVE** is the late threat, making her first start since she was claimed for \$50k on Jan. 1. It signals optimism she returns in a race from which she cannot be claimed; her speed figures in N1X turf routes compare favorably to these. The challenge is five furlongs, which might be shorter than she prefers. She will rally late. **LONG MAYSHE REIGN** looms an obvious contender after missing by a length last out in a similar starter allowance at Santa Anita. She made the lead late, but got nailed by a last-to-first longshot winner. 'REIGN figures for an up-front trip. AVOIR finished a head behind 'REIGN while making her first start in six months. AVOIR may improve second start back.

Second Race**1. Splendor****2. Nokie****3. Don't Bring Crazy**

SPLENDORA moves up to N1X following a maiden crusher by more than five lengths. She is drawn outside her main pace rival, and has more speed than her late-running main rival two stalls to her outside. **SPLENDORA** is likely to start as an underlay in a race that is anything but a walkover. At least two of her rivals are legit including **NOKIE**, the aforementioned stretch-runner. **NOKIE** finished second in five straight, including four at this class level. The winners of those four races are all stakes winners. **DON'T BRING CRAZY** is the main pace rival for the favorite. 'CRAZY set the pace and finished a creditable third last out behind Pleasant, who subsequently finished third by a half-length in the Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Sprint. 'CRAZY has only one option from the rail: use her speed.

Third Race**1. Escape Artist****2. Living Life****3. Red Cross Knight**

ESCAPE ARTIST won this N2X/optional claiming turf route last out at SA; both summer starts on DMR turf were solid including a runner-up finish by a head. 'ARTIST has become more effective with an off-the-pace running style, which matches the closers-friendly course profile the first two weeks of the meet. **LIVING LIFE** might be the field's fastest finisher. He routinely runs his final quarter-mile in less than 23 seconds. 'LIFE is likely to trail the field early; he will fly late. Apprentice rider Welfin Orantes has had limited opportunities on turf; he entered the week 1-for-21 lifetime on turf, with 3 seconds and 5 thirds. **RED CROSS KNIGHT** has something the top pair lack. That is, tactical speed. Although the DMR course has mostly favored closers, 'KNIGHT is a six-time winner who does not necessarily require the lead. He ran well rallying from fifth to finish a close third over this course in summer. REIQUIST finished only a half-length behind **ESCAPE ARTIST** last out; he defeated that rival three back. This race is a split of race 7.

Fourth Race**1. Cloudy Rose****2. My Lovely Lydia****3. Newport Dreamz**

CLOUDY ROSE is the tepid choice in this Cal-bred maiden-50 sprint. She returns to the main track, drops slightly from Cal-bred special-weight, and adds blinkers. Third in both previous dirt sprints, she switches to perennial leading rider Juan Hernandez. **MY LOVELY LYDIA**, the only first-time starter in the field, showed speed in a gate work Oct. 19 (viewed online), and debuts against a fairly modest lineup. 'LYDIA is trained by Tim Yakteen, who also entered last-out runner-up **NEWPORT DREAMZ**. The latter improved in her second start; the race was somewhat validated when third-place finisher Sunset Grazen ran back and won a Pleasanton maiden-claiming route by 11 lengths. **SKYLIGHT RIDE** ran better second time out than her running line looks. She was blocked behind runners on the turn, got shuffled back and lost position, re-rallied only to get blocked again, then finished evenly along the inside. It was a nightmare trip by a filly who is better than her three-length margin of defeat might indicate.

Fifth Race**1. Going Viral****2. Dettori****3. Cajun Gold**

This turf sprint for MSW 2yos is a scramble. **GOING VIRAL** is the uncertain selection based on pedigree and workouts. Sired by Into Mischief (15 percent wins debut 2yos), her dam won her career debut (albeit a route). Purchased at a 2yo sale this spring for \$400k, 'VIRAL has posted fast works for trainer Richard Mandella and could fire first out. **DETTORI** is a Munnings colt with decent workouts, though Bob Baffert rarely wins with debut runners in turf sprints: 0-for-15 the past five years according to Formulator. DETTORI is second preference, nonetheless. Also-eligible **CAJUN GOLD** finished second both turf sprints this summer, while **DIRTY WORDS** debuts with a solid workout pattern. This race could go any number of ways.

Sixth Race

1. Rank	2. Mellencamp	3. Brother Tony
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RANK produced the best race of his four-start career last out when he ran long for the first time; that runner-up finish stamps him the choice in his dirt mile for maiden 2yos. Last out he lagged off the pace, produced an extended rally, missed by less than a length to the front-running winner, and finished more than three clear of third. RANK followed that effort with multiple bullet workouts over the DMR track. The Doug O'Neill trainee is a likely winner from off the pace, although he will have to catch second-time-starter **MELLENCAMP**. The latter dueled and finished second in his debut sprint; he is bred to run long (by Constitution). Trainer Bob Baffert won a pair of maiden dirt routes this season with second-start juvenile stretch-outs (Emerald Bay, Showers). **BROTHER TONY** finished behind top choice RANK last out, but it was an improved effort over his last-place finish in the G1 Del Mar Futurity. **CURVINO** finished in the money four of five starts including a pair of routes on turf. He ran okay on dirt early this season.

Seventh Race

1. Packs a Wahlop	2. El Potente	3. Old Pal
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PACKS A WAHLOP returns to allowance/optional claiming after he was overmatched and finished last in a G2 turf mile. Both starts this summer at DMR, second and third by a length in N3Xs, stamp him the proper choice in this N2X. 'WAHLOP runs for the \$100k optional claim price and should get as cozy trip positioned right behind the speed. **EL POTENTE** rationed his speed last out and produced a solid third-place finish in a restricted stakes race. He ran well his only previous start on DMR turf, and will be setting or pressing the pace. Deep closer **OLD PAL** missed by a nose to race-3 selection Escape Artist last out. 'PAL will be motoring late. **LORD BULLINGDON** is a stakes-winning 3yo returning from a layoff and facing older for the first time; **MUBTADAA** is sprint speed stretching to a mile. Win or lose, he will keep the pace honest. This race is a split of race 3.

Eighth Race

1. Bullard	2. Kalea Bay	3. McKinzie Street
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BULLARD, a 2yo colt by Gun Runner, won his six-furlong debut as if he will improve as the distances increase. He gets another furlong to work with in this seven-furlong G3. Void of speed first out, he uncorked a strong rally through traffic on the turn, took aim at the pacesetter, and ran right past. He trained well since, and has the ingredients to develop into a top 2yo this year and top 3yo next year. **KALEA BAY** was blown away by BULLARD two back, but KALEA BAY subsequently crushed maidens by more than eight. Improving each start, likely the speed of the field, KALEA BAY looms the one to catch. **MCKINZIE STREET** drops in class after finishing third in a G1 route and second in a G1 sprint. The inside post is a challenge. First-time starter **MADAKET ROAD** has been working bullets at Los Alamitos and SA. It is out of the ordinary to debut in a stakes, but 'ROAD worked 58-flat from the gate last week, in company with the \$3.2 million yearling purchase Barnes.

Ninth Race

1. Rashmi	2. Cameron Slough	3. Annie's Joy
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RASHMI crushed N2L starter rivals by more than four lengths last week, and wheels back in sharp form while moving up one level to N3L. No reason the pace-presser cannot fire again, even wheeling back in nine days. She must hold off the late rally of **CAMERON SLOUGH**, who followed her N2L win two back with a creditable runner-up finish in an entry-level allowance. **ANNIE'S JOY** stretches back to two turns and drops in class; **KATERINI** returns from a nine-month layoff with races last year that are fast enough for this cast. However, turf-route comebackers from this stable typically race into shape rather than fire first start back.