

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

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Date: 8/8/2019

Race 5: \$25K/N2L contested at 6.5-furlongs on the main track

Post: approx. post 4:01 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

Yesterday, a 30/1 shot blew up the tote in a beaten-claiming event: I don't think that will happen today in this \$25K/N2L contested at 6.5-furlongs on the main track (since the top two choices make a lot more sense than the favorites yesterday), but the point remains the same—it's very hard to trust animals who don't have a will to win. Still, we'll see if we can figure out the winner and whether he'll offer any value in this eight-horse field.

#1 SATRAPA (8/1) gets some class-relief today after facing off against Cal-bred N1X types, but it should be noted that this 4-year-old hasn't really run back to his sophomore numbers, so he hasn't really progressed, which is probably why he gets a career soft spot today. He does have tactical speed, so Pereira will need to use that while breaking from the tricky rail at this distance—but it wouldn't shock me if this one woke up today, since you can make excuses for his three 2019 races (three back was off a long layoff; two back, he had trouble; last time he raced along a deep rail). GRADE: A.

#2 VINTAGE HOLLYWOOD (8/1) is a grinder who will run his race, but he's had his fair share of chances at this N2L level (kind of like yesterday's 30/1 winner, Mr. Magico), and he's shown no burning desire to win, settling for the minor awards instead. He'll have to hope they go a good clip early, so he can plug along while hoping the race falls apart. He's a good exotics candidate with his grinding style at today's distance, but he's tough to support with any confidence on the win end. GRADE: B.

#3 STREET TO INDY (4/1) is another grinder who will be plugging away in the lane, especially since he'll be facing a soft group after two efforts against tougher starter foes, including a nice second-place finish two back while going 7-furlongs at Santa Anita. Unfortunately, he's been off since January, so he'll need to be ready to run a good one off the bench, but this guy usually runs his race no matter what—it's just that someone else always seems to run a better one, as is evidenced by this guy's 1-for-20 record (with seven seconds and two thirds). GRADE: B.

#4 ACED (7/2) looks to be one of the ones in here, returning a new gelding after a solid race at today's distance while facing starter foes. He's got "*Solid*" **OptixWORKS** heading into this race, and his location on **OptixPLOT** makes him look very good in here against these. GRADE: A.

#5 I BELONG TO BECKY—program scratch.

#6 EMTECH (5/2) is a 3-year-old who came off an October layoff last time to attend the pace against much better animals at Los Al before weakening. He now drops into this low level for his second start off the bench—and his trainer has been on fire this meet, suggesting that this guy is in it to win it. Still, it's tough to take a short number on anyone in here, and I have a feeling this guy might get pounded at the

windows, since he has speed and broke his maiden for \$75K. Do note that he was a voided-claim out of that maiden race, so he clearly has his issues, and that would also explain today's \$25K spotting. He could run off the screen, but he seems like very little value in here as a 3-year-old versus elders (albeit very mediocre ones!). GRADE: B.

#7 SALTARIN (10/1) re-adds blinkers and cuts back from a mile race at Los Al, where he tracked wide and was floated out before weakening against restricted \$16K claimers. This is a better group than what he faced last time, so he'll need to do better today, especially since he's winless on dirt with his best races coming around two turns on turf. Maybe if the race falls apart, he can clunk up for a slice?

#8 SEA'S JOURNEY (12/1) should ensure a good pace, since he likes to throw down the gauntlet early and hope for the best. It took this guy a while to finally break his maiden, which he did against Cal-bred \$50K types two back. Last time, he dueled through slow splits against starter foes and wilted badly. This is a much better spot for him, and the outside draw should take some of the early pressure off him, since he can be in a very good spot either dictating or stalking the pace—but his tendency to give up the ghost late while going 6.5-furlongs is a concern to me. GRADE: C.

#9 OUTLAW (4/1) seems a little short on the morning-line at 4/1, since he was 5/1 against similar types while racing on turf for Miyadi. Belvoir took him out of that race, so we'll see how he does while putting this guy back on the main track. He has tactical speed, so he should sit right off Sea's Journey, but he looks like he'll need a career-best to overtake that foe and then fend off the stalkers. GRADE: C.

CONCLUSION

I have a hard time betting these conditioned-claimers with any sort of confidence, so even though I like #4 ACED, I would want more than 7/2 on him. I will see how the rail is playing today, however, and if it seems fair, I might give #1 SATRAPA (8/1) a look, since I can make excuses for his three races, and the class-relief can't hurt, but I'll be the first to admit: I don't feel strongly about this race.

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