

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

On Twitter @ScatoniSureShot

For more information on *Optix*, visit www.optixeq.com or on Twitter @OptixEQ

Date: 8/9/2019

Race 7: \$150K Solana Beach for Cal-bred fillies & mares going 8F on turf (rails at 24-ft.)

Post: approx. post 7:00 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

What a fine renewal of the \$150K Solana Beach—named after the beautiful seaside town a stone’s throw north of Del Mar (and also my home for the last 15 years!)—a one-mile turf affair for Cal-bred/Cal-sired fillies and mares. The rails are at 24-feet, but there is plenty of speed in here to make this an honest race (even though the turf course has started to favor forwardly placed types the last several racing days).

#1 MO SEE CAL (5/1) got absolute perfect trips in her last two tries against N2X foes, but she failed to do the business while going a flat mile on the dirt. She moves back to the turf today after a freshening, and that could be what the good doctor ordered for her, since she’s done decent work over this course, and her trainer has been firing on all cylinders so far this meet. She’ll also get a great forwardly placed trip under Prat, who will ensure this gal is in the perfect spot. She figures in here. GRADE: B.

#2 COCO KISSES (20/1) has sprint speed, so she should be contesting the early pace, since her two wins both came while racing on the lead, as she hasn’t really shown a strong ability to pass horses. Last time, she tried two turns for the first time and finished second while going a mile on dirt against three other ladies despite setting a very slow pace. She seems up against it today while bringing an 0-for-2 turf record to this party. GRADE: X.

#3 BATTLEGROUND STATE—program scratch.

#4 DON’T SELL (12/1), the speed component of the O’Neill duo, won three races in a row, all sprinting and all racing up on the pace. She stretched out last time in the Melair while going 8.5-furlongs on dirt, and she contested the pace (after bobbling at the start) and tired badly. As a daughter of Square Eddie, she’ll appreciate getting back on turf, but her best races have come going 5-furlongs on the lawn at Santa Anita, so I think she’s going to have some issues today with other forwardly placed runners in the race. Maybe look for her next time cutting back to a turf-sprint? GRADE: X.

#5 FIERY LADY (12/1) was 4/1 in the Fran’s Valentine at Santa Anita while going a mile on the turf—she tracked wide and predictably gave way, as that kind of trip rarely wins on turf. I can be forgiving of that race, but it should be noted that this 5-year-old mare seems a slight cut below the best in here. We’ll see if Hollendorfer can move her up, since he took her for \$40K in June out of a 5-furlong sprint, and he now protects her while adding blinkers and stretching her out in a Cal-bred stakes race. I’m tempted to watch one, but 12/1 is tempting, and her **OptixWORKS** report is very good, if you think the Dorf can improve her chances. GRADE: B.

#6 PULPIT RIDER (5/2) is going to be very tough in here, since she has a very nice late kick, and she’ll be super-fit cutting back from a 10-furlong race where she was uncharacteristically on the lead early.

Expect Van Dyke to just settle her and wait to produce her solid stretch run. I really liked her two back in the Fran's Valentine at 5/1, and she ran a much better-than-looked race, stuck in traffic for most of the way while racing behind horses on a speed-favoring turf course where the winner went wire-to-wire. She looks very good to me, and she has races that are plenty good enough to win this. GRADE: A.

#7 DONUT GIRL—program scratch.

#8 LYNNE'S LEGACY (7/2), the second O'Neill entrant, has terrific come-home times (and a big **OptixPLOT** box), and you don't earn nearly \$360K in your career without being super-consistent, as this 6-year-old mare has shown throughout her career. That said, she's a deep-closer who is always at the mercy of pace and trip. At least the presence of O'Neill's other horse means that this gal should get a hot pace to close into—then we'll see if she can outkick Pulpit Rider. Regardless, she's a must-use in your exotics. GRADE: B.

#9 SNEAKING OUT (3/1) is a half-length away from being a Grade 2 winner, so she has class on her side—but it should be noted that this forwardly placed runner has been plying her trade on dirt (and once on synth), so it remains to be seen if she'll handle the lawn. The top side says no, but at least there is Kitten's Joy blood underneath, so maybe she'll like it. I'm not crazy about the post or the likely pace-scenario for a gal who has now lost two in a row at ten-cents and ninety-cents on the dollar, but at last Smith bothers to ride (but that might be because Van Dyke defected to Pulpit Rider?). I'll look to beat her. GRADE: C.

#10 A WALK IN THE PARK (6/1) looked good last time, clearing her N1X condition with a professional stalk-and-pounce effort over a Santa Anita course that favored her forwardly placed running style. She'll likely get another stalking trip today, so Franco will have to avoid a wide journey, looking to tuck this gal in just behind the speed horses. If he can do that, she should have a chance to fill out the exotics, but there is also a world in which she ends up 3- or 4-wide, and that would be the kiss of death. If she trips out, she's in with a chance, since **OptixWORKS** likes what they see from her coming into this race. GRADE: C.

CONCLUSION

I really like #6 **PULPIT RIDER** (5/2) in this spot, but unfortunately, she's your favorite and won't offer much value in the contest. As for the "B" contenders, they are all price-dependent, so I'll just have to watch the board and make a post-time decision. Good luck!

If you'd like to learn more about **OptixEQ**, visit www.optixeq.com, and for a bonus Del Mar Race of the Day analysis from **OptixEQ**, click here: <https://optixeq.com/2018-optixeq-del-mar-race-of-the-day/>