

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

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Date: 8/11/2019

Race 7: \$100K Rancho Bernardo Handicap (G3) for fillies & mares going 6.5F on the main track

Post: approx. post 5:02 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

Nine fillies and mares are entered to contest the 6.5-furlong distance of the \$100K Rancho Bernardo Handicap (G3). There shouldn't be a blazing pace, but we should get a fairly run race.

#1 YUVETSI (8/1) hasn't been able to get her campaign going this year, coming off a 224-day layoff back in May to run a clunker in a three-horse field at Santa Anita, losing to two of today's foes. She then hit the bench again and now shows up here. On the plus side, it's nice to see Sadler still thinks she's graded-stakes caliber, since she won this race last year, beating today's likely favorite. On the downside, she'll have to go hard from the rail, and Danuska's My Girl will make things difficult for her. GRADE: X.

#2 SHOW IT N MOE IT (8/1) is a cool Cal-bred who has earned almost \$500K—not bad for a gal whose sire's stud fee is a lowly \$2K. Part of her success has been her consistency, as she rarely runs a bad race—just trying all the way to the wire, and that is a quality I greatly admire in a Thoroughbred, so I can't say anything bad about this cool gal, but I do think she's a cut below the best in here. Several of these have got her squarely on form, so she's going to need to summon some extra oomph today, and I don't think that's very likely given that most of her success has come in the statebred ranks. GRADE: X.

#3 KRAM (20/1) has done fine work in the minor leagues, so she gets a major class test today, facing the big gals here in Southern California. She looks a decided cut below the top few in here, but it should be noted that Mike Smith bothers to ride, and any time he shows up in a stakes race for an invading barn, you should pay attention. Still, this seems like an ambitious spot for the Queen of New Mexico. GRADE: X.

#4 EXUBERANCE (10/1) will hope there is a pace meltdown so she can run on for a slice, just like she did last time in the Great Lady M. (G2) at Los Al, where she completed the trifecta at 65/1. A win seems out of her scope, but I've always liked the way she tries, and she is battle-tested against some quality females—but she'll have to make up a few lengths on Anonymity, and that's going to be tough in here. GRADE: X.

#5 ANONYMITY (2/1) should be 4/5 in here, so if you get anywhere near 2/1, it would be an act of beneficence from the racing gods. Then again, if she's 2/1, then maybe somebody knows something! The only slight concern is that she has bigger fish to fry in a few months, since she's being pointed to the Breeders' Cup Filly & Mare Sprint (G1), a race she lost by a dirty neck last year at 31/1. You can forgive her recent defeat to the very talented Marley's Freedom in the Great Lady M. (G2), since that race had all the hallmarks of a prep race anyway. Beat her to cash. GRADE: A.

#6 LADY NINJA (3/1) is in very good form, having won four of six races, showing a strong willingness to dig in all the way to the wire. That said, she faces a class test today, since she just recently cruised through her two allowance conditions, including a win on July 19 here at Del Mar, beating five other N2X foes. No surprise that Prat sticks with Anonymity, despite having won five times with Lady Ninja before. On the plus side, Van Dyke was aboard for her other two wins, so at least he knows her well. As a 5-year-old mare, she'll need to summon a career-best, but I can't fault the connections for testing her mettle today since she's in such good form. GRADE: C.

#7 ZUSHA (20/1) is eligible for an N2X, so she's in deep water today, having just cleared her N1X while going a flat mile at Santa Anita. She got a perfect trip that day and only had to beat four other girls. Win-rider Van Dyke defects to Lady Ninja, who has already beaten this gal once before. If she won, it would be one of the bigger upsets of the meet. GRADE: X.

#8 BEST OF ME (12/1) makes her first start for D'Amato, and he has had some success with runners like this, so I'm a little interested in her as an exotics candidate at a price, but it should be noted that before this gal went to Emerald in the spring, she was trained last year by Peter Miller, and the best he could do was saddle her to a fourth-place finish in the 2018 Great Lady M. (G2). Granted, she had a wide journey against the monster Marley's Freedom, and she was a 3-year-old facing elders for the first time, so you can view it through that lens. Her recent Emerald Form is just okay, but she has three solid works over this track, and as a lightly raced 4-year-old, she still has upside. GRADE: B.

#9 DANUSKA'S MY GIRL (7/2) turned into a win-machine the moment Franco hopped on her back—much to my chagrin because I just did not see her becoming as good as she's been recently, since she needed \$62.5K maidens and a 5-pound weight-break to finally graduate last July here at Del Mar. Three starts later, she started a four-race win-streak that saw her climb the allowance ladder before winning both the Las Flores (G3) and Desert Stormer (G3) in front-running fashion. Last time, however, she set too quick of a pace at Los Al in the Great Lady M. (G2) and was overtaken by a few of these. I'm sure Franco will look to clear early, but I'm thinking Yuvetsi will have to go from the rail, and that will likely soften this gal up a little bit late. She should be in front turning for home though... GRADE: B.

CONCLUSION

I don't have anything clever in here, as I think **#5 ANONYMITY (2/1)** is the nuts. If you're looking for something clever, maybe D'Amato can have **#8 BEST OF ME (12/1)** ready to run a big one off those three works while making her first start for his barn. At least the price will be right on that girl.

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