DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

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Date: 11/15/2019
Race 7: Cal-bred $20K optional-claiming/N1X contested at 8-furlongs on turf (rails at 30-feet)
Post: approx. post 3:34 p.m. PST

OVERVIEW

Today's contest race is a neat Cal-bred $20K optional-claiming/N1X for fillies and mares going one mile on the turf with the rails at 30-feet. There isn't a lot of speed in here, but there is one horse who should ensure an honest pace. Can she also hang on to wire the field?

#1 DOC YCO CHEEKS (5/2) is a full sister to the graded-stakes winning Cheekaboo, so there is ability here—and she showed it last time in start number-two when she looked stylish breaking her maiden. There is plenty of upside, but she is a 3-year-old filly stepping up against older winners today, so she will have to earn it (and at what will likely be a short price). GRADE: B.

#2 AVALON RIDE (10/1) has won two in a row, including a nice one-mile turf victory last time when she beat conditioned-claimers at 31/1. It was a nice race, but it was a much weaker field than she faces today. I'm fine watching one against this level of competition. GRADE: X.

#3 ROSE DUNN (9/2) has good early speed, and there's no one in here who is really fast enough to challenge her for the early lead, so she should have the running of the race under Prat. That said, she had the lead last time and was run down in the lane by one of today's foes. It was her first try going long, however, so maybe that experience will help. She might not hold on for the win, but she's a must-use in your exotics. GRADE: A.

#4 SAPPHIRE KID (6/1) is a little interesting to me because she looks to be sitting on a big race, having just prepped against open $25K claimers in a 5.5-furlong turf sprint, which is just too short for her. She's running for the $20K tag today because she's already cleared this hurdle—and if you draw a line through her form against much tougher animals, she looks pretty solid. GRADE: A.

#5 BRAHMS COMMAND (20/1) adds blinkers and gets the services of Maldonado, so I suspect she is going to be asked to run early and then hope for the best while chasing Rose Dunn. I'm not sure that's going to help her cause, since her previous try at this level and distance saw her just run around the track. Now I think she'll run around the track and get tired late. GRADE: X.

#6 MARJORIE E (5/1) was somehow favored at this level last time when going 5.5-furlongs on the turf—and she just ran a lackluster sixth, running on a little bit late. The stretch-out will help, since she's done most of her decent work around two turns, but she's also a gal who has been stuck at this level for a very long time, so I'm having a hard time seeing her break through today given her current blah form. GRADE: X.

#7 LUCKY MS JONES (5/1) should be running on strongly late, since she has a decent kick for this level—and that should give her every chance over this course, which is much more kind to her style than Santa Anita was. Last time, she had trouble but still mounted a nice late bid, so it doesn't bother me that she finished behind a few of these. I think she can overturn that decision today. GRADE: A.

#8 MAGNIFICENT Q T (7/2) just ran second at this level and distance last time in her first start for O'Neill, who took her for $16K two back. She should be competitive right back, but she will have to work out a good trip from the outside, so there is a chance you will see her tracking 3-wide—and that's not usually the winning trip on turf. She's obvious, but 7/2 is no great shakes when others look just as good. GRADE: B.

CONCLUSION

This is a really good contest race. The two morning-line choices have no serious knocks, but they aren't standouts either, so I'm going to board watch. I'll look at **#3 ROSE DUNN**, **#4 SAPPHIRE KID**, and **#7 LUCKY MS JONES** and see which one offers the best value—but I suspect that will be Sapphire Kid given her dirty form.

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