DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY
By Frank R. Scatoni
On Twitter @ScatoniSureShot
www.FrankScatoni.com
www.OptixEQ.com

Date: 8/17/23
Race 5: $50K starter-allowance for fillies & mares going 8.5-furlongs on turf (rails at 30-ft.)
Post: approx. post 4:00 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

We kick off another week here at Del Mar with a really competitive $50K starter-allowance for fillies and mares going 8.5-furlongs on turf with the rails set at 30-feet. I thought there were a few places you could land in here, so you might have to let the board decide.

#1 PEGS A. K. GIRL (7/2) looks solid in here. She has tactical speed, gets a good draw, and she drops in class while attracting Berrios—so it's no surprise she's 7/2 on the morning-line. The problem is: her trainer is currently riding an 0-for-20 streak in turf races, so do you really want to take a short price here? GRADE: B.

#2 A CROWN FOR KITTEN (20/1) looks a cut below the top few in here, since she needed Golden Gate foes to get her second win, which came going today's distance up north with today's jock Ayuso doing the steering. Toss this gal's last race where she was pitched too high, and she figures to run a lot better today for a trainer who has been super sneaky the last few years. Clearly, that 11-furlong race against allowance foes last time was a form darkener—but is she good enough to beat these on this circuit? GRADE: C.

#3 BUILT DIFFERENT (12/1) goes out for another sneaky trainer, who has done good work claiming horses back East and having them run really well here at Del Mar. I'm sure last time was a "let's see what's under the hood" run when this gal finished fifth at 24/1 back in June at Santa Anita in her first start for Capestro. Note that there's no drop today, which tells me that the barn is expecting this one to run much better here. GRADE: A.

#4 QUICKLY PARK IT (10/1) is coming off a February layoff after finding 3-year-old stakes foes too much for her. It's interesting that this Cal-bred has stakes form, since she looks really slow on paper, but she's eligible for this spot today because she debuted for a $50K tag last summer. I'm tempted to watch one with the bug-boy in the irons as this gal faces elders for the first time. GRADE: C.

#5 AWESOME TAYLOR (6/1) was 3/1 at this level and distance back in June, and she ran three-quarters of a race before flattening out to finish sixth. She then got walloped while running for $16K last time on dirt, but O'Neill saw fit to claim, and I like that he protects her today. You can expect her to be forwardly placed, but will she have enough stick to hold on late? Meh. GRADE: C.

#6 ROSE BARTON (IRE) (4/1) was 5/2 at this level and distance back in June, and she had all kinds of trouble and ended up seventh. You can draw a line through that race. She now comes off a freshening, and I like that Desormeaux sticks around to make amends after that troubled trip last time. She figures to run a good one today. GRADE: B.

#7 DENDERA (8/1) gets wise-guy consideration in here, since she has form at this level, and she's trained by a conditioner who has been lights out so far this meet. I think Powell is legging up Couton to throw his fellow Frenchman a bone. Expect this one to track from off the pace and power home resolutely. GRADE: A.

#8 PALEO'S PRINCESS (5/1) has done fine work around one turn, but she's never been around two turns before, so it's tough to know how this stretch-out sprinter will fare. You know she'll be forwardly placed, but there should be an honest early pace, so this one might be looking at a 3-wide stalking trip, and that's never where you want to be on this turf course. I'll let her beat me. GRADE: C.

#9 ZEYARAAT (3/1) is definitely the one to beat, as she has solid form against much better animals—and Hernandez ends up here. She'll have to work out a trip from the 9-hole, but she is tactical enough for J. J. to get good position early, and she's certainly classy enough to outkick them all late. GRADE: A.

#10 ANNIE'S SONG (10/1) (AE) removes the hood, but she is a stretch-out sprinter, so you can expect her to gun hard from out here to contest the early pace—and that's going to take its toll late. I do like that Yakteen just took her for $28K and now protects her, but I can see a world in which this is just a prep for a 5-furlong turf sprint next time. GRADE: X.

<u>CONCLUSION</u>
As you can see, there are a few places to land here—and if I had to list my top picks in order of preference, it would be **#9 ZEYARAAT (3/1)**, **#7 DENDERA (8/1)**, and **#3 BUILT DIFFERENT (12/1)**. Obviously, the contest play would go through the latter two—or both as a double win bet—so I'll watch the board and make a game-time decision.

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