

## DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

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**Date:** 8/19/23

**Race 8:** \$300K Del Mar Oaks (G1) for 3yo fillies going 9-furlongs on turf (rails at 0-ft.)

**Post:** approx. post 5:45 p.m. PDT

### OVERVIEW

This is one of my favorite races of the year, the \$300K Del Mar Oaks (G1), a 9-furlong turf affair for 3-year-old fillies with the rails set at zero-feet. I've said many times before, there's nothing like seeing a classy filly step up and run a big race. It's just different. A classy filly is something to behold (pun intended!).

We've got a nice assortment of ladies, including two D'Amatos, two Mandellas, and an East Coast invader. Who gets the dough?

#1 AND TELL ME NOLIES (12/1) has done fine work on dirt, winning a Grade 1 here last year as a juvenile, so there is plenty of class here—and she showed some of that last time when getting on turf for the first time, encountering some trouble, yet still finishing up well to get third in the San Clemente (G2), which was a 14-horse field. She never really looked comfortable, so I think she can do much better today if she can relax early. Don't sell her too short. GRADE: B.

#2 WINDOW SHOPPING (6/1) has talent, plain and simple. She started her career on turf, and she ran sixth, but she had a rough trip, and it was her first ever start, trying to go long on turf. She must have shown enough in the mornings to attract Hernandez, so I know there is talent here. She then blitzed maidens in an off-the-turf affair, so Mandella kept her on dirt, where she eventually won a Grade 2. Now she's back on turf, which is where Mandella wanted her all along, and she retains the services of Berrios. That said, 6/1 seems like a pipe dream to me. GRADE: A.

#3 INFINITE DIAMOND (12/1) tried turf for the first time last time, and she ran a creditable fourth with some trouble—and note that it came against older horses. She now makes the second start of her form cycle while dropping in against her fellow 3-year-olds, and that's always a good move. I think she can take a step forward today, but she's going to have to really show up to beat the best in here. GRADE: X.

#4 RUBY NELL (6/1), the second Mandella runner, has won two in a row, including a dominating victory last time when she wired 10 other NIX foes going 8.5-furlongs earlier in the meet. That was a really nice effort, while her maiden-breaker showed that she doesn't need the lead to win. That said, she faces tougher animals today, so we'll see how she fares, but I wouldn't fault anyone for taking a shot, but I'm not feeling her as much today. GRADE: X.

#5 ANISETTE (GB) (5/2) was very impressive last time when beating a few of these in the San Clemente (G2), sitting well off the pace and powering home to win stylishly as the 2/1 favorite. She figured to run a big one that day, second off the bench after a troubled U.S. debut, so we'll see if she can move forward again here. I think she can, especially since Powell has just been doing a terrific job all meet long, especially on the turf. GRADE: A.

**#6 IMPACT WARRIOR (IRE) (4/1)**, the first D'Amato entrant, ran a very good second against older horses earlier in the meet, so I'm thinking that was a prep race for this spot against fellow 3-year-olds. She smoked home in 23-flat, which—trust me—is proper racehorse time, especially for a sophomore. The sky is the limit for this gal, and I think she'll relish the added ground today. That said, I'm kind of surprised she's tabbed as low as 4/1 on the morning-line. I suspect she'll go off higher and be the value of the race. GRADE: A.

**#7 BIG POND (8/1)** has looked really sharp in her two victories, but they both came sprinting on dirt against Cal-breds, so we'll see how she handles a bunch of new things today. Yakteen does a really good job all around, so if he thinks this gal can route on the turf while facing open company, well, then who am I to argue? That said, I'll choose to bet against this one today. Prove me wrong! GRADE: X.

**#8 ABSOLUTELY ZERO (50/1)** seems to have been given absolutely zero chance by the morning-line maker, who tabbed this Cal-bred at 50/1. I can't say I blame him, since this gal has never tried two turns on turf before—and her best races came last year while she was a juvenile running in abbreviated dirt sprints. GRADE: X.

**#9 BE YOUR BEST (IRE) (4/1)** has done very good work back East against some decent animals, so she must be considered, especially since Hernandez ends up here. I always give East Coast turf horses extra credit, but I think this is a pretty good SoCal group out here, and I have to think that she's going to be overbet a little bit because of Hernandez's presence. Plus, her come-home times aren't all that impressive, compared to some of the others in here. Let's take her on. If she wins, tip your cap. GRADE: C.

**#10 PARIS SECRET (IRE) (15/1)**, the second D'Amato charge, was discounted in the San Clemente (G2) at 15/1, and she ran to those long odds—though in her defense, she did have some trouble. Before that, she ran a decent third in the Honeymoon (G3), so she's not too far off the best in here. Still, she'll have to work out a trip from out here, and I just like her stablemate more in this spot. GRADE: X.

## CONCLUSION

I was so impressed by **#5 ANISETTE (GB) (5/2)** when she won the San Clemente (G2) that I instantly tabbed her as the winner of this race weeks in advance. I still think she's the most likely winner, so long as she can repeat that last awesome performance. Still, she's not a great contest play at her short odds—and I suspect she'll be shorter, more in the 8/5 range.

As you can see, I also gave "A" grades to **#2 WINDOW SHOPPING (6/1)** and **#6 IMPACT WARRIOR (IRE)**, but I think the morning-lines are wrong here. I'm pretty sure Window Shopping is going to go off much shorter than her 6/1, while Impact Warrior (Ire) should at least be 6/1. If Window Shopping is 6/1 in here, I'll eat my hat—so that's why **#6 IMPACT WARRIOR (IRE)** will be my top pick in the race, though I reserve the right to change that based on the tote board (since morning-line maker John White is way more right about these things than I am)!

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