

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

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Date: 8/24/23

Race 6: \$32K/N2L conditional-claimer contested at 8-furlongs on turf (rails at 24-ft.)

Post: approx. post 4:35 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

After Mother Nature gave us Sunday off, we should be well-rested for Thursday's 8-race card (and for the rest of the meet!). When we left off, we saw Anisette (GB) destroying a nice group of 3-year-old fillies in the Del Mar Oaks (G1), but we won't see as impressive of a performance today in this conditional-claimer—but it's still a good contest race! Let's look at Race 6, a \$32K/N2L conditional-claiming event contested at one mile on the turf with the rails at 24-feet.

#1 BROTHER REID (12/1) was 6/1 at this level last time, and he put in a mild late bid to finish fourth (in a roughly run race where one of today's foes dumped the jock and ran loose around the track). He typically leaves himself with too much to do, which is probably why Cerin is adding blinkers today while legging up a 5-pound bug-boy. I think that might be enough to have this one sneak in the exotics, but he'll need a big move forward for the W today—and as a 6-year-old, that kind of improvement seems unlikely. GRADE: C.

#2 CHIEFS BLANKET (20/1) is a 4-year-old who makes only his third career start, so he cedes experience to several of the others in here. Also note that he's a maiden facing winners, so this seems like an ambitious spot for him (just like last time when he squared off against starter foes). That said, he makes his second start of the year for O'Neill, who adds blinkers today, so a step forward is not out of the question—but why not just run him in a maiden race? GRADE: C.

#3 BEEF WINSLOW (4/1) has tactical speed, drops in class, and gets the top jock in the colony to do the steering, so I have to think that this one is going to run a big one today. Also note that Miller removes the hood, so I can see this guy just relaxing early in a good spot before setting down for the stretch run. He's obvious. GRADE: A.

#4 DERECHO DANDY (5/2) is also an obvious contender in here, making the second start of his form cycle after just missing against a better group of animals at this price tag last time. He tracked the pace and finished up willingly in that mile affair, so any step forward and he's in with a big shot today. The only concern is that Sadler has been a bit unlucky this meet. Check out that record: 50: 4-12-7. GRADE: A.

#5 LANSDOWNE (GB) (3/1) has run respectably at similar levels before, but he hasn't been able to get the job done. He's also spent his whole career up until now sprinting, so we'll see if he can handle two turns for the first time today. I'm not one to discount any D'Amato turf horse, but I can see this one getting overbet, and the fact that he's never routed before worries me a bit. GRADE: C.

#6 GIOVINAZZO (15/1), the second O'Neill runner, has tactical speed, so you can ex-out his last race, where he had to steady a bit and was taken out of his game early. Note that the hood comes off and that this 3-year-old is running for this low price tag for the first time, so 15/1 seems too high to me. I can see him running much better today, but he will need to show a bit more starch in the lane when the real running starts. GRADE: C.

#7 STORMY VICTORY (12/1) was 7/1 at this level last time, and he ran a decent third with an eventful journey (in a roughly run race where one of today's foes dumped the jock and ran loose around the track). He now makes the second start of his form cycle while shortening up a bit, so he should be fit and ready to move forward. The only concern is that the leading rider bails, so because of that, I'll side with others. GRADE: C.

#8 OVERRULE (8/1) was declared a non-starter last time when the gate opened early, he lost his jock, and then proceeded to "finish fourth" while running wide and riderless around the track. He should be fit off that! I like that Mandella brings him right back at the same level, and I like that Maldonado wants to come back for another try. If Giovinazzo doesn't want to make the lead, then this guy is fast enough to do so—or he can rate as well. GRADE: A.

#9 NUMERO DIX (5/1) removes the hood while coming off a June freshening after a better-than-looked fifth at a similar level last time. He lost to Brother Reid, but he wasn't too far off, despite having plenty of trouble. He can run better today, and I like that Berrios sticks around. The barn has certainly cooled off a bit since Santa Anita, but this one is a fit here, and I expect him to run well. GRADE: B.

#10 AURELIAN MAN (20/1) did decent turf work way back in 2021, but he disappeared for a while, and when he came back in July, he showed up sprinting on dirt against cheaper horses. He's definitely a better turf horse, so perhaps Marquez was using those as form darkeners for this spot. Or, perhaps this 5-year-old just isn't the same horse after such a long break. Tough to say—but I do know that the post won't do him any favors. I can see him gunning hard from out here, and I think that softens him up late. But it wouldn't shock me if he outran his odds. GRADE: C.

CONCLUSION

This is a pretty tough race filled with unreliable animals. You can land on a bunch of different horses, so when that's the case, I typically just like to plant a flag with the best price horse instead of spreading deep. I'll plant that flag with **#10 OVERRULE (8/1)**. I can see Maldonado being very aggressive from out here—and with the rails out 24-feet, that's a pretty good strategy. If you want horses who make a lot more sense, I do think that **#3 BEEF WINSLOW (4/1)** and **#4 DERECHO DANDY (5/2)** are the ones to beat, and **#9 NUMERO DIX (5/1)** is in with a shot as well.

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