

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

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Date: 8/27/23

Race 8: \$25K claimer contested at 8.5-furlongs on the turf (rails at 12-feet)

Post: approx. post 5:37 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

We've had such competitive turf racing all meet long—at every level, too. And today is no different. We've got a 10-horse field assembled for today's contest race: a \$25K claimer contested at 8.5-furlongs on the turf with the rails at 12-feet.

#1 MR. T'S THIRSTY (6/1) looked sharp beating \$20K conditional-claimers last time while racing on dirt. Gary Stute claimed him and now moves him up slightly while trying him on turf. I'm not sure that will be the greatest move, since this guy is 0-for-4 on the lawn. At least he draws the rail and gets a 7-pound weight-break, if you're a believer. GRADE: C.

#2 INDY LYON (5/1) has speed and a good inside post, so he should be in the vanguard early—but I'm expecting a decent early clip, so we'll see if he has enough starch late to get the job done. Note that back East, he just missed against more expensive \$35K beaten-claimers, so this is a very good spot for him—but he did lose to one of today's foes. GRADE: C.

#3 ONE FAST BRO (3/1) is an honest horse, but I'm a little curious about this spot, since just a few months ago, this guy was running well against allowance foes up at Golden Gate—and that meet is just about to start, so I'm surprised the connections are risking this one for a tag. That concerns me a bit, so I'm going to try to beat—but this guy's figures are certainly good enough to beat these. GRADE: B.

#4 NEVER SEEN BEFORE (IRE) (15/1) flew home late two back to beat \$32K beaten-claimers at Santa Anita, so this is a good spot for this one, coming off a June layoff. That said, this horse is 0-for-3 at Del Mar and 0-for-3 at the distance, so I'm not feeling him all that much today. GRADE: C.

#5 DISCRETIONARY DAY (15/1) has speed and an aggressive jock, so he should be part of a quick early pace—but do note that he's running for a tag for the first time, so he may have a slight class edge today if he can run back to some of his Cal-bred allowance races last year. That said, he missed more than a year, and his comeback race on July 30 wasn't much to look at—but he did have to break from the 12-hole. He'll need a big step forward today, but I don't think he should be as high as 15/1. GRADE: B.

#6 JACKS OUTLAW (8/1) was 36/1 at this level last time, and he ran to those long odds. He finished seventh, but he did try all the way to the wire, improving his position late, so perhaps the added half-furlong will help his cause. He has competitive races at this level up at Golden Gate, but we all know that this is a tougher circuit. GRADE: C.

#7 ISHIHARA (20/1) has cashed a lot of checks, but they've mostly come sprinting on dirt in the minor leagues. He's never been on turf before, so this seems like odd placement—but this is his first try for new trainer Samuel Calvario, and he is excellent with his new charges, so perhaps he thinks this guy will really take to the lawn. He's a little interesting for your exotics. GRADE: C.

#8 **GRAPE NUTS WARRIOR (7/2)** looks like a legit contender to me. His come-home times in his races back East are above par, so if he can bring that form here, he's going to be tough. He seems spotted well at this \$25K level, and note that he beat Indy Lyon when both of them were at Gulfstream. GRADE: A.

#9 **NO SLO MO (20/1)** is the wise-guy pick for me. I'm not sure why he's 20/1 on the morning-line, since he's running at this claiming level for the first time after facing allowance horses for most of his career. His come-home time in that 9-furlong allowance race at Santa Anita was pretty good, and his Turf Paradise form is even better. I don't normally like Turf Paradise form, but I think this guy has a big shot at a big price. GRADE: A.

#10 OUR SILVER OAK (4/1) was a top pick for me last time in a \$32K/N1Y, and he had a horror trip and could only manage sixth—but he was beaten only 2-3/4 lengths. He now makes the second start of his form cycle while adding blinkers, so he should run a decent one today. Two concerns: the post is no picnic: and Puype—whom I love—has been absolutely Arctic this past year. GRADE: B.

CONCLUSION

This is an interesting race with some solid-priced horses to consider—but any time you can make a case for a 20/1 shot on the morning-line, you've got to take a shot. #9 **NO SLO MO (20/1)** is the contest play for me!

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