

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

On Twitter [@ScatoniSureShot](https://twitter.com/ScatoniSureShot)

www.FrankScatoni.com

www.OptixEQ.com

Date: 12/1/23

Race 6: \$40K optional-claiming/N1X for fillies & mares going 5F on turf (rails at 18-ft.)

Post: approx. post 2:58 p.m. PST

OVERVIEW

We've entered the home stretch for the Bing Season, as it's closing weekend and the last three days of racing here until next summer. But fret not, it's going to be three really good days with some excellent stakes races and quality fields. Today's contest race isn't a stakes race, but it's a very competitive \$40K optional-claiming/N1X for fillies and mares going 5-furlongs on the turf with the rails at 18-feet. It's a great contest race, so if you need a price, you'll have a few places to land.

#1 DENIM IN GOLD (12/1) is very interesting to me, even though she's had her chances at this level. She also seems up against it from a pace perspective, stuck down at the rail in a big full field where she seemingly will have to use all of her early speed—but I'm not so sure that will be the case today, and that's mainly because of the jock change. Berrios can be aggressive when he needs to be, but he is so good at getting horses to relax, race covered up, and then get brave when a hole opens. That's the kind of (contrarian) trip I'm expecting today. GRADE: A.

#2 GEM MINE (6/1) has been a top pick for me three times in a row now, and she hasn't been nice to me! Granted, she's run well, but she hasn't shown the requisite oomph in the lane. Dare I give her one more chance? Maybe, but I like her more for underneath given her lack of finishing ability. Of course, the day I don't bet her to win will be the day she does! GRADE: B.

#3 READY JET GO (15/1) isn't the worst 15/1 I've ever seen, since she does have a win at today's distance and over this course, albeit against much weaker starter foes. In fact, she's done decent work against starter foes since that win, but she hasn't been as good against classier animals. I don't care about last time when she was racing above condition, but she has failed twice before at this N1X level. I can see her running on late for a slice. GRADE: C.

#4 ORGANIC (7/2) is a 3-year-old who doesn't have the flashiest résumé, which is why I find it very interesting that Prat takes the call—and that she's only 7/2 on the line. Two back, she was 19/10 at this level, and she was well-beaten, though she did have some trouble, so I won't be too harsh—but she's a Cal-bred whose two wins came with absolute perfect trips. She'll probably get a perfect trip today with Prat, but then we'll see if she's good enough to beat open foes. I'm fine taking her on. GRADE: C.

#5 HAYLEY LEVADE (5/1) has been a nice horse to own, since she knows how to earn her keep, but she's had plenty of chances at this level and hasn't been able to get the W. I've liked her before in much easier spots, and she didn't win, so I like her a lot less today in this tough, big full field. GRADE: X.

#6 RED DIAMOND (8/1) hasn't been able to string together races this year, so that's a big concern for me when evaluating this 6-year-old mare. That said, she did come off a layoff to run a decent one for a trainer who was once one of the best in the world back in the day. I like the confidence he shows by moving her up in class and protecting her second off the bench, but I have to think someone will prove better in the end. GRADE: X.

#7 STAY AND SCAM (4/1) is a Cal-bred who has tactical speed, so she should be in a good forward position early—but will she be three-wide around the turn? That's not usually the winning trip. She ran a really good second at this level last time when breaking from the rail down the hill, so she should be fit off that. She definitely figures, but she will need to get the right trip. GRADE: B.

#8 PALEO'S PRINCESS—program scratch.

#9 TEEN DRAMA (6/1) doesn't look all that great on paper, but do note that she was claimed two back by D'Amato, who rarely gets involved in the claim game anymore, so that tells me he saw something he liked. Last time, she was 14/1 at this level at Santa Anita, but she ran respectably considering she had a horror trip. I like that D'Amato still races her above the claim price, and I like that Fresu (who just missed with her two back) hops on board. GRADE: A.

#10 REAL FIRE (15/1) is pretty consistent, so I can't knock a gal who shows up for work and earns her keep—but she's had a few chances at this level already, and she hasn't been able to find the winner's circle. It's interesting that Smith takes the call, but I can see him dropping off the pace early and coming on through the lane too late. Maybe you can use her underneath. GRADE: X.

#11 STRESSED—program scratch.

#12 BYE BYE MISS PIE (6/1) hasn't been seen since May 2021, so we'll see if this 6-year-old mare will be ready to run. She hinted at ability two years ago, going off as the favorite in three of her four races, but they all came on dirt. I have to think Puype still thinks this old girl has something to offer otherwise he wouldn't bother racing her again, but I have to watch one today. GRADE: X.

#13 ARINNITI (FR) (4/1) (AE) has very nice Euro form, but she is coming off a year-plus layoff, so it's hard to know if she's the same horse who beat 13 other foes at Dundalk back in 2022. Then again, this is a Mandella trainee we are talking about, so if he thinks she's ready, then who am I to argue? Still, this is a tough post at this distance, and her Euro trouble lines say

she likes to be forwardly placed, which means she's probably looking at a wide trip from out here. Watch one? GRADE: C.

CONCLUSION

You can make a case for a lot of these, but I think **#1 DENIM IN GOLD (12/1)** should outrun her odds in here, though her trip will have a lot to do with how she does. She's shown me enough in her defeats to suggest she's capable of clearing this condition, so why not today at a big price?

Visit www.frankscatoni.com for more content.

If you'd like to learn more about **OptixEQ**, visit www.optixeq.com.