

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

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Date: 8/10/24

Race 6: \$50K starter-allowance contested at one mile on the turf (rails at 12-feet)

Post: approx. post 4:32 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

Nine starter-allowance types are entered to greet the starter in today's contest race, a \$50K/N2L starter-allowance contested at one mile on the turf with the rails at 12-feet. I thought there was a fair amount of speed in here, so I'm expecting an honestly run race with the closers getting a fair shake.

#1 JACK KEROUAC (7/2), the first D'Amato entrant, should be sitting on a peak effort while making the third start of his form cycle. Two back, he wasn't entirely disgraced against much tougher allowance foes; while last time, he ran a creditable third while racing on dirt. He will appreciate a return to the green stuff, making him a very logical contender—but I'm not too interested in taking a low price in this competitive race. GRADE: B.

#2 BELMONT BILL (3/1) has run well at this level, but how can you trust a 1-for-16 runner who has six seconds and two thirds? I can't. I also think he'll be up on a fast pace, so I'm going to bet that someone runs him down in the lane. At 3/1, you can have him! GRADE: C.

#3 SEA OF CORTEZ (IRE) (10/1), the second D'Amato, was impressive when breaking his maiden last time at the \$50K level. He had nowhere to go, found an inch of daylight in the stretch, bulled his way through, and got up to win by a neck, showing a lot of tenacity in the process. The concern is that his best races have come in turf sprints, so we'll see if he can make some noise while going two turns. A repeat of that last race makes him a contender, but can he repeat that race going a mile? GRADE: B.

#4 HOT LEGS ROMOLO (8/1) was 8/1 at this level last time, and he finished seventh. Before that, however, he just missed at this level, so it's not like he doesn't belong here. The issue for me is his run style. He likes to be on or near the lead, like Belmont Bill and a few others, so I think he's going to be involved in a fast early pace, and that will take its toll late. GRADE: C.

#5 FOXTROT HARRY (15/1) also likes to be forwardly placed, and that is going to be an issue here. He also seems to be more of a synth horse than a turf horse, though we do only have one turf race to go on when he finished fifth at the \$50K level while trained by Mike Maker. Sandino Hernandez claimed him and promptly put him on the Gulfstream Park synth, where he beat MSWs. Can he win on the grass? Maybe, but I'm fine letting this 3-year-old beat me. GRADE: C.

#6 **JWELED SHILLELAGH (9/2)** should be tough. He just missed at this level back in May, and now Michael McCarthy brings him back fresh and ready. I know he finished behind Belmont Bill last time, but the Santa Anita course plays more to forward types than this Del Mar course does. I think Rispoli—who is riding lights out on the turf—will have him in the perfect spot turning for home. GRADE: A.

#7 CARIBBEAN KING (15/1) shouldn't be 15/1. He's raced three times at this level, and he was 3/1, even-money, and 5/1. Granted, he lost twice as the favorite in those races, but he ran well. His bad race last time is a toss, since he had trouble and couldn't show his best stuff. Rispoli defects to his inside neighbor, but Reylu Gutierrez is no slouch. Upset special? GRADE: A.

#8 NASHOBA'S JOY (5/1) ran a closing fourth at this level last time at 11/1. Two of today's foes finished ahead of him, but they weren't separated by much in a blanket finish. I'm not sure I like the blinkers-on move for this guy, since the one time he tried blinkers, he was terrible (granted, that was on Keeneland dirt). He seems perfectly logical, but I'm kind of unexcited about him. GRADE: B.

#9 ADIOS COLE (8/1) is another Gulfstream Park invader who has solid synth form, but he looks to be a pace factor, keeping things honest for the stretch-runners in here. He's also never been on turf, so I have no idea how this guy will act on the lawn, but his figures certainly fit at this level if you think a surface switch won't matter. I'm a little skeptical, so I'll let this 3-year-old beat me. GRADE: C.

CONCLUSION

Any time you can make a case for a 15/1 shot, you have to play him. I think **#7 CARIBBEAN KING (15/1)** shouldn't be this price, but if he is, he's the play. These horses have taken turns beating each other, so this guy is right there with the other horses who are going to take more money. I also think **#6 JEWELLED SHILLELAGH (9/2)** is going to run a good one, and 9/2 seems like a very square price on this horse, so he's a potential contest play as well if you don't necessarily need to drop a bomb here.

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