

## DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

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

[www.FrankScatoni.com](http://www.FrankScatoni.com)

[www.OptixEQ.com](http://www.OptixEQ.com)

**Date:** 8/17/24

**Race 8:** \$300K Del Mar Oaks (G1) for 3yo fillies going 9-furlongs on turf (rails at 18-ft.)

**Post:** approx. post 5:32 p.m. PDT

### OVERVIEW

It's one of my favorite races of the summer, the \$300K Del Mar Oaks (G1) contested at 9-furlongs on the turf with the rails set at 18-feet. We've got a really nice group of ladies in here, including two East Coast invaders and the top-three finishers of the San Clemente (G2), which was held Opening Weekend here at Del Mar.

#1 ISCREAMUSCREAM (8/5), the first D'Amato entrant, was brilliant when wiring the field in the San Clemente (G2), beating a few of these in the process. That was her first try going two turns, and she answered the call like a champ, fending off her rivals to secure the victory. That said, that race came going a mile, and now she'll have to negotiate an extra furlong against some gals who are proven at the distance. She should have another pace advantage, but the stretch-runners will now have added distance to try and run her down. She's a really nice filly, but at the price she'll be, I'll try to take her on. GRADE: B.

#2 CIRCLE OF TRUST (6/1), the second D'Amato runner, won the Honeymoon (G3) pretty easily at Santa Anita at 3/1. That was her second win at today's 9-furlong distance, so you know she can stay the course. I have no real knocks on her, but I prefer the gal who beat her two back in the Providencia (G3), my top pick, Medoro. GRADE: C.

#3 WHISKEY DECISION (5/2) has won three in a row, including a sharp victory at today's distance when beating overnight stakes foes at Delaware Park back in July. I like that she was forwardly placed that day, so perhaps she'll be the one to keep the rail horse honest. That said, I'm not sure whom she was facing in that race, since she was sent off as the 1/5 favorite. She was expected to win as easily as she did. She certainly looks fast enough on paper, but this is the toughest task of her career, and at 5/2, I'm not falling over myself to back her. GRADE: C.

#4 ZONA VERDE (IRE) (8/1), the third D'Amato runner, rallied too late in the San Clemente (G2), finishing second while unable to get to her frontrunning stablemate. Still, it was a really nice performance for a gal who was coming off a freshening after a few dull races. That was by far her best effort to date, and it should be noted that she really likes this Del Mar turf course, with two wins and one second in three tries. She's never been this far, but she came home in solid time in that mile race, so the distance wouldn't seem to be an issue. I know she finished ahead of Medoro last time, but Medoro has beaten her a few times before, and I'm expecting

Medoro to move forward big-time today, while I think we may have already seen this gal's very best. GRADE: C.

#5 BUCHU (12/1) has some good races against some really nice ladies back East, so we'll see if she can take her show on the road. She did actually ship out West once before for the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf (G1) at Santa Anita, and even though she finished sixth, she ran a pretty good race. She got going a little too late in the Regret (G3) two starts ago when trying this distance for the first time. She looks like a contender to me, and at 12/1, she definitely offers some value. GRADE: B.

**#6 MEDORO (5/1)** is my top pick. I've always liked this gal. I think she's very classy, and she's super-game. You don't win races by a head, a neck, and a nose if you don't have the eye of the tiger. I know she just finished behind two of today's foes in the San Clemente (G2), but she drew the nine-hole going a mile, was off a step slow, and had way too much to do in the lane—yet she motored home in real racehorse time. She was also coming off a freshening, so I'm going to guess she might have been a little short that day anyway, since I would bet anything that this has been the target for her all along. She has a win at the distance, and I think she's a great price at 5/1. GRADE: A.

#7 SAKURA BLOSSOM (20/1) showed some interest late in the San Clemente (G2), but she finished behind three of today's foes while seemingly crying out for more distance, since she galloped out nicely. Two back, she ran a good second in the Honeymoon (G3) at today's distance, but she was no match for Circle of Trust. She's pretty honest, so you can expect her to run her race, but will that be good enough? Unlikely, unless the addition of blinkers makes a big difference. GRADE: X.

#8 SEA DANCER (20/1) is a half to the awesome colt Johannes, but this gal hasn't shown quite the ability of her half-brother. Don't get me wrong, she's a solid runner, but she's been handled by several of these before, and her races against this kind of company have been sorely lacking. GRADE: X.

## **CONCLUSION**

This is a terrific race, and there are several in here who will be good contest plays, especially if the rail horse gets overbet, which seems likely given the pace advantage she will have. That said, I'm still all about **#6 MEDORO (5/1)**. I think 5/1 would be a great price on her.

-----  
Visit [www.frankscatoni.com](http://www.frankscatoni.com) for more content.

If you'd like to learn more about **OptixEQ**, visit [www.optixeq.com](http://www.optixeq.com).