DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY
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Date: 8/24/24
Race 5: $20K/N3L conditional-claimer for fillies and mares going one mile on the main track
Post: approx. post 4:03 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

Today's contest race is a competitive $20K/N3L conditional-claimer for fillies and mares going one mile on the main track. These aren't the most reliable runners, but this group isn't too bad, making this an interesting race.

#1 UNA PALABRA (15/1) was the 2/1 favorite at this level and distance last time at Los Al, but she chased inside and weakened. I won't be too harsh on that performance, since the inside wasn't the place to be, and she probably needed the race. She'll be sharper today, but will she be good enough? She's never really run fast enough to win at this level, so she will need some improvement to get the W today. GRADE: C.

#2 SLAM DIEGO (2/1) looks pretty good to me. She came off a very long layoff last time and ran a pretty good second in a 6-furlong sprint where she was protected as a waiver-claim. I'm pretty sure Dean Pederson was using that as a prep race for this two-turn affair. This gal likes Del Mar and is proficient at the distance. GRADE: A.

#3 DANZING CAT (6/1) has sprint speed and is stretching out, so you can expect her to be dictating the early pace. Will she have enough stamina to stay on? She's only tried two turns once, and it was the worst race of her career. Granted, it came against far better animals, but she just faded so badly. She's also taking a pretty big step up in class after just beating $12.5K/N2L foes last time. GRADE: C.

#4 DORINE'S WILD CAT (10/1) ran a solid second last time against open $8K claimers, so there were some hard-knockers in that field. I like that she came from off the pace to get second on a day when it was tough to make up any ground. She loves this mile distance, and she should be grinding away late—but she's never really run fast enough to win at this level, so she'll have to show a lot more today to get the victory. GRADE: C.

#5 RUN FOR MY HONEY (12/1) should get a great forwardly placed trip, since she has tactical speed and likes to be involved early. She was 3/1 at this level last time going a mile at Los Al, but she didn't exactly have a good trip, so I won't hold that seventh-place finish against her. Her recent races aren't very fast, but she definitely has some races from back in the day that are a good fit here. I like that she makes the third start of her form cycle, and I especially like that Pereira sticks around. No one boots home more longshots on this circuit than he does. Upset special? GRADE: A.

#6 ASIAN MATRIARCH (5/2) ran a career best last time when facing age-restricted $25K claimers— and I like the way she won. She tracked outside, which wasn't the best part of the track, but moved when asked and was game to the wire, winning at 3/1. She has to face older horses today, and she hasn't had

much success in that department. Granted, those races came against tougher starter foes, so this is an easier spot for her—but I don't really want to take 5/2 on a 3-year-old filly against some solid older ladies. GRADE: B.

#7 GRAY FROST (8/1) has been off a long time, so clearly something went wrong with her last August when she started at this level when eligible for the ship-and-win bonus. She was sent off at 5/1 in that sprint race, and she never really had a chance to show her stuff. Her Midwest form before that wasn't half-bad, showing a lot of versatility. She also gets an aggressive jock for a trainer who is having a quietly good meet. I prefer others, but this 4-year-old is a bit of an X-factor. GRADE: B.

#8 LOVE OUR FAMILY (5/1) has speed and an outside post, so I would suspect Fresu to put her in the race early and hope for the best. She crushed cheaper foes last time, notching her second win, so now she has to move up in class and face better animals. That last race was really good, however, so perhaps this 4-year-old is on the ascendancy. It looks like she might need the lead to win, but with the stretch-out sprinter down toward the inside, she's going to have to sit outside of her. I think that softens her up late. GRADE: B.

CONCLUSION

There are a few places to land in here. I do think **#2 SLAM DIEGO (2/1)** is a very likely winner here, but I'm not sure her price will help many people in the contest. The sneaky play is **#5 RUN FOR MY HONEY (12/1)**, and she should be every bit of 12/1 off that last race. She will need to improve, but she makes the third start of her form cycle, so at least she should be sitting on a peak effort.

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