

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

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Date: 9/1/24

Race 10: \$80K optional-claiming/N1X for 3yos going 8.5-furlongs on turf

Post: approx. post 6:02 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

We've got a really interesting \$80K optional-claiming/N1X for 3-year-olds only going 8.5-furlongs on the lawn. There are several in here who have a shot, making this a really competitive race.

#1 TEJON PASS (8/1) is interesting to me. I like when a sophomore comes off a layoff and faces older horses and then moves back in amongst his own age group. That's the case with this runner, who has squared off against some decent runners in the past (albeit on dirt). His first turf try last time wasn't too bad, putting in a nice late run in a 5-furlong turf sprint. I expect him to move forward today second off the bench. GRADE: A.

#2 WITHOUT BORDERS—program scratch.

#3 THE RABBI (20/1) never really had a chance last time when drawing the eight hole. He was also 17/1, so the punters weren't too interested. He won his debut coming from off the pace in a turf sprint, so it's possible he's just a closing sprinter, but he did gallop out well last time, so we'll see how he does while drawing a much better post. He could take home a small piece of the pie, but I prefer others. GRADE: C.

#4 SIMPLEXITY (IRE) (12/1) was 30/1 in his U.S. debut, but he was facing nice horses in the Oceanside. This is a much easier spot. He also gets a massive jock upgrade and a much better post, so he should run a much improved race. I can see him in the hunt, but he seems better suited to underneath. GRADE: C.

#5 UNCLE HAPPY (9/2) must be considered, as he makes his first SoCal start for D'Amato, who does well with these types. This horse already has three wins, including a sharp victory last time in an N1X against older horses at Lone Star. He has tactical speed and should get a very good trip. GRADE: A.

#6 CATHAL (IRE) (5/1) likely needed his last race, coming off a long layoff. He chased the pace while wide and failed to kick on. I don't like that Rispoli bails, but this horse still has some upside as a lightly raced 3-year-old. Perhaps he can do better second time off the bench. GRADE: A.

#7 GROGU (20/1) is a pretty honest horse, but he's been plying his trade up north, and this is a different ballgame, especially since he couldn't hack it on this circuit when he first started his career. He needs to show more against some pretty decent horses down here. GRADE: X.

#8 PROMISSIO (8/1) has run creditably a few times before at this level, but he hasn't been able to get the job done. He'll need to show more, and he'll have to do it from an outside post, and that's going to be tricky since he likes to track the pace, so he's probably looking at a wide journey. GRADE: B.

#9 KAMAINA CRUISER (12/1) returns a new gelding and tries turf for the first time after flopping in the Los Al Derby on dirt back in June. I'm not seeing it. GRADE: X.

#10 AMERICAN GLORY (GB) (4/1) took a while to break his maiden, but he did it over this course last time. He likes to come from off the pace, so he'll need a pace to close into while working out a trip from the outside. Two back, Cathal (Ire) beat him on the square, so he'll need to reverse form over that foe. GRADE: C.

#11 MYSTIC SPIRIT (3/1) has won three in a row, but the waters get deeper today for a horse who has been facing Cal-breds. He also drew the short straw with this difficult post. His last few races are certainly fast enough to win this, but at 3/1, you can have him from out here. GRADE: C.

CONCLUSION

This is a really cool race, and it wouldn't shock me if several of these runners were right there on the wire. I think **#5 UNCLE HAPPY (9/2)** is the most likely winner, but I'm interested in **#6 CATHAL (IRE) (5/1)** and **#1 TEJON PASS (8/1)** as well. Based on the morning-lines, I'd go with Tejon Pass for the contest, but this is a race where I'd let the board decide.

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