DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY
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Date: 9/6/24
Race 6: $12.5K open-claimer contested at 5.5-furlongs on the main track
Post: approx. post 5:30 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

These aren't the most expensive animals, but I think they will put on a good show in this competitive $12.5K open-claimer contested at 5.5-furlongs on the main track. We've got a nice full field, and the pace should be fair (but on the quick side, obviously, at this short distance).

#1 CRYPTO CRAZE (20/1) was 32/1 in a $20K/N3L last time, and he showed brief speed before weakening, losing to a few of today's foes. He'll have to go hard from the rail, and I think that will take its toll late. GRADE: X.

#2 KELL'S BELLS (15/1) was nearly 6/1 against a few of these last time in that same $20K/N3L. He too flashed brief speed before weakening badly. He'll be part of the early pace yet again, but it remains to be seen if he can replicate those Texas races here on this circuit. GRADE: X.

#3 I'M A LUCKY MAN (8/1) is good value at this price, but I doubt he'll be this high. He was nearly 4/1 against a bunch of these in that same $20K/N3L affair, and he was the only horse who contested the pace and stuck around to finish third. He was on the worst part of the track that day as well, so I'm expecting a solid effort today, though there is a world in which he gets caught up in another speed duel. GRADE: A.

#4 THIS IS A JOKE—program scratch.

#5 SMARTY NOSE (30/1) couldn't beat $8K claimers at 20/1 last time, so I'm not sure how he's going to beat more expensive runners today. GRADE: X.

#6 ULTIMATE (2/1) beat tougher $20K foes last time, but he was a voided-claim, so it's a guessing game as to how he'll return today. I don't think voided-claim horses should be allowed to drop in class; if there is nothing wrong with the horse, then he gets away with an easy win against much weaker company because everyone is scared to claim him. Anyway…if this horse runs the same race as last time, he wins—but at the same time, O'Neill is just begging someone to take this guy. GRADE: B.

#7 EL DIABLO ROJO (15/1) has done good work at this low level, and he should get a pace to close into, since he's a deep closer. He's also done good work at 5.5-furlongs, but it's been very tough this meet to make up a lot of ground in the lane at this abbreviated sprint distance. He could win, but he'll need some luck—but he's eminently usable in your exotics. GRADE: C.

#8 MAN OVERBOARD (6/1) has a special place in my heart because he is one of the few Spot Plays I crushed for my "Frankly Speaking" column for In the Money Media. If memory serves, he was 20/1 on

the morning-line, got bet down to 4/1, and won like an even-money shot. He was way off the pace after a slow beginning, but it didn't matter. He was in turbo mode, weaving through horses and exploding into the lane to win easily. It was a wow performance. And that's why I'm against him today. After that incredible effort, he's now dropping to $12.5K? Why? Knapp should run this horse for $40K off that last race. He could win here, but I'm skeptical about going back to the well today. He seems like claim bait to me. GRADE: B.

#9 GYPSY LYNN (15/1) ran a very good race against $10K claimers last time, but she was facing her own sex and now she has to face the boys. She also loses the benefit of having the rail. She'll go hard, but I'd be shocked if she came home first. GRADE: X.

#10 CAJUN BROTHER (4/1) was 9/2 against $10K foes last time, and he got the job done, wiring the field through very slow splits. This is a much tougher group, and he won't get away with such an easy journey today. I'm against him at this price. GRADE: C.

#11 WORTH LOOKING—program scratch.

#12 TOP GUN TOMMY (8/1) drew a lousy post, but if he gets the right trip, he's going to be very tough, dropping to this low level for a trainer who got really hot a week ago. This horse has been facing much tougher animals, and if he can repeat his April 27 race where he beat $25K claimers, he's the winner. At 8/1, he's a terrific price, even with this bum post—but I doubt he'll be this high. GRADE: A.

#13 YES HE CAN (10/1) tried to wire $8K foes last time at 8/5, but he was overtaken by two other horses, and he could only manage third. This is a tougher group. He's looking at a wide forwardly placed trip, and I doubt he'll have the requisite punch to get the job done today. GRADE: X.

CONCLUSION
If **#12 TOP GUN TOMMY (8/1)** had a better post and really went off at 8/1, I'd love him as a win bet, but I hate the post, and I'm suspecting he'll be bet in half. That leaves **#3 I'M A LUCKY MAN (8/1)** as the value of the race. He makes the second start of his form cycle and gets a way better post to show his best stuff. He'll be prominent early; then we'll see how much he has left in the tank late.

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