

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

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Date: 9/7/24

Race 5: \$100K Juvenile Fillies Turf for 2-year-old fillies going a mile on the turf (rails at 0-feet)

Post: approx. post 3:30 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

Juvenile fillies take center stage on this 11-race Saturday card. In Race 4, we've got the \$300K Del Mar Debutante (G1) contested at 7-furlongs on the main track, while here in Race 5, we've got a full field of 2-year-old gals going one mile on the lawn with the rails at 0-feet. Note: this is the first of two online contest races today, with the other coming in Race 7.

#1 MADONNA OF LORETO (15/1) tracked the pace in a 5-furlong turf sprint to start her career and she just kind of ran evenly to finish fourth while acting a bit green. D'Amato rarely has them fully cranked, so I won't be too harsh on her performance. I have to think this one will do much better today while stretching out. She'll also save all the ground. That said, she is still a maiden (though she did scratch out of an easier maiden spot on Friday to run here). GRADE: C.

#2 **THOUGHT PROCESS (9/5)** was bet down to even-money last time when she crushed a field of eight other maidens in her first try going long on turf. It was a really nice race, but she was facing a pretty weak bunch, which included several first-time starters. She faces a tougher field today, but if she moves forward off that last race, she's going to be very tough. GRADE: A.

#3 **AN CHORR DUBH (IRE) (10/1)** comes right off the boat to make her U.S. debut for Glatt, who does fine work with European imports, especially for Rancho Temescal. I have to think they bought this gal out of that July 27 7-furlong romp at Gowran Park (Ire) to run in this spot. I don't trust Mike Smith at all on turf, but if this one is forwardly placed toward the inside, she'll have a big shot. GRADE: A.

#4 FONDEST DREAM (5/1) broke her maiden in April at Brighton (GB), beating seven other horses in a 5.5-furlong turf sprint. Her Timeform Rating came back slower than her inside neighbor's, and yet here she is at half the price on the morning-line. She must be working well, and Baltas knows how to win with a nice turf horse, but I prefer others slightly more. GRADE: B.

#5 CASALU (7/2) was no match for her stablemate Nooni last time in the Sorrento (G3) going 6-furlongs on dirt. I guess Baffert thinks this gal has no chance turning the tables on that foe in the Debutante (G1), so he'll try this one on turf—and that's not usually a good move for Baffert. The breeding is fine, but I have to side against at 7/2, since this is really not Baffert's usual M.O. with a \$775K purchase. GRADE: C.

#6 GLOBAL CONSORT (50/1) showed speed last time against a few of these, but she couldn't sustain her run and finished eighth at 36/1. I'm not seeing it today, but Capestro must think this one is better than she's shown, so I have to think we can at least expect an improved effort. GRADE: X.

#7 SUPA SPEED (6/1) won't be 6/1. I have no idea why this one is so high on the line. She looked terrific when breaking her maiden at first asking going 5-furlongs on the lawn here on August 1. The horse she beat came back to win, and this gal is bred to only get better as the distances get longer. Win-rider Berrios sticks with Thought Process, so that's a bit of a concern, but look who you get instead: only the leading rider of the meet. GRADE: A.

#8 APOCALYPTIC (50/1) was 21/1 against Thought Process last time, and she ran a blah fourth. She did have a little trouble, but I don't think it mattered. Two back, she lost to a few more of these, so she really needs a big step forward to turn the tables on those foes as well. I'm not seeing it. GRADE: X.

#9 CAITLIN FEVER (15/1), the first Peter Miller entrant, got a good forwardly placed trip last time and held second. It was her first try going long on turf, so it was a nice effort, but she will need to show a lot more oomph in the lane. She should be prominent early, and that has been a good place to be over this turf course, but I think someone runs her down again. GRADE: X.

#10 HEY LIL LADY (30/1) was 11/1 against a few of these last time, and she ran an even fourth. It was her first try going long on turf, so I won't be too harsh, but the two who just beat her figure to improve just as much as this gal, and that means she'll need a big step forward today to get the W. GRADE: X.

#11 TWIRLING LIGHT (20/1), the second Miller runner, had a rough trip in her debut, yet she showed plenty of grit and still ran on for fourth. Hats off to her. She did cost \$600K earlier in the year, so she is expected to be a runner. I'm sure she is better than that last race looks on paper, so don't be surprised if this one is put in the race and is in contention turning for home. I think others will prove better, but I can see her vying for a slice. GRADE: X.

#12 SEA RUNNER (12/1) is bred to be a good one, since she's a half to the superstar Johannes, who is probably the best turf horse out here on the West Coast. She was favored in her debut going long on turf, and she could only manage third with a wide journey. She should move forward big-time off that, but what kind of trip is she going to get from out here? Rispoli will need to work his magic, but if he does, this one should have the ability to be right there at the end. GRADE: B.

CONCLUSION

Based on the morning-lines, **#7 SUPA SPEED (6/1)** offers the most value, but I have to think this horse will go off shorter than that. If she does, then **#3 AN CHORR DUBH (IRE) (10/1)** is the right contest play. They bought her to run in this spot, so you have to think they really like their chances today.

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Date: 9/7/24

Race 7: \$40K optional-claimer/N1X contested at 8-furlongs on turf (rails at 0-feet)

Post: approx. post 4:30 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

An oversubscribed field of 14 horses have been entered in this \$40K optional-claiming/N1X contested at one mile on the lawn with the rails at zero feet. It's a wide-open race, making this a nice addition as today's second contest race!

#1 LOTTERY PICK (6/1) is an honest horse who typically puts forth his late run, but he often comes up short when racing at this level. At least he gets to save ground today, so he's not impossible, especially since he likes Del Mar and should be sitting on a peak effort second start of the form cycle. GRADE: B.

#2 ZIO JO (20/1) was a top pick for me last time when he ran third against starter foes at 9/2. It was a good race, but it wasn't good enough. This is a much tougher group, so he'll have to show he can handle allowance types. He can beat me. GRADE: X.

#3 LAHAINA FLAVOR (10/1) ran too good to lose last time when coming from off the pace to just miss and finish second at 7/2, nosing out Zio Jo. This guy has always had a nice late kick, so you can expect him to be running on through the lane, but he hasn't been good enough to contend with allowance foes, so he'll need to show he can finally hang with the big dogs. GRADE: C.

#4 AURELIAN MAN (20/1) has done good work against much weaker animals, so this is a big step up in class for him. He too has a decent late kick, so he should be in the thick of it at the eighth pole, but I have to think others will prove better in this tough spot. GRADE: X.

#5 NEWS AT TEN (GB) (2/1) looked good in a 5-furlong turf sprint while coming off a layoff, so that race should have him primed for a big run here. Overseas, he won going a mile, so I'm thinking that's been the plan all along with this guy; it's just that he hasn't cooperated physically. He now gets to string two races together, and Sadler is excellent when stretching them out. I'm not crazy about the 2/1 morning-line, however. GRADE: A.

#6 BARELY FUNCTIONAL (15/1) is a useful Cal-bred who is pretty consistent. Three back, he was 7/2 at this level and he ran an even third, so he'll need to show a bit more oomph against open foes. That said, he should be sitting on a good one after a tough trip in the Cal-bred California Dreamin' last time. I don't think he'll win, but he's usable in your exotics. GRADE: C.

#7 FIFTH STREET (20/1) is interesting to me. He was on Baffert's dirt program to start his career; he moved to the Yakteen barn for that August 3 start, also on dirt, and he seemed just out for a spin. Now Yakteen—an excellent turf trainer—moves this one to the lawn. The breeding is solid, so I'm expecting this one to move forward big-time while trying turf for the first time. I think they'll try to wire this group,

but that might be tough, since there is some other speed in here—but at 20/1, I'm willing to pay to find out if this guy is any good on the lawn. GRADE: A.

#8 SMART CODE (9/2) tried to wire them last time, but he was run down by a pretty nice D'Amato runner. Last year, this guy was knocking heads with some really good horses, so he's going to be tough today, second off the bench. Note that he doesn't need the lead to win, so Rispoli can settle him off the pace and come running late. GRADE: A.

#9 ON THE WHIM (6/1) looked good winning the California Dreamin last time, stalking the pace and drawing off to win comfortably. It was a really nice performance, but this is against open company, and he won't get such a good trip this time, going from the one-hole to the nine-hole today. GRADE: C.

#10 TALKLESSWORKMORE (20/1) just wired Cal-bred allowance types. He won't be able to wire this group of open allowance foes. If he does, then I lose! GRADE: X.

#11 ONE OF THESE DAYS (IRE) (10/1) should be super-fit, cutting back from much farther races where he just kind of ran evenly. I think he's better sitting off the pace and making one run—and that's what he'll likely do today from this outside post. He's had his chances at the level, but I think he has more ability than he's shown. GRADE: B.

#12 EYE ON RY (20/1) gets a bum post and the wrong jockey for this spot. I have to think Espinoza will gun hard and hope for the best, since this one showed speed going long on turf at Hawthorne two and three back. Then again, I can probably make the lead at Hawthorne considering the horses on that circuit! Last time, he tried to track the pace but was hooked very wide the whole time, so you can ex-out that race. He's probably better than that last race, but I'm fine letting this one beat me. GRADE: X.

#13 RED CROSS KNIGHT (8/1) (AE) was not ridden optimally last time, and that cost him any chance, even though he still managed to finish third. He needs to be up on the pace, so he will also gun hard from out here to be in the vanguard early. That will compromise his chances late. GRADE: X.

#14 KING APOLLO (15/1) (AE) earns his keep, but he has not been able to get the job done at this N1X level. He just missed by a nose last time, but that has been the story of his career. He'll need to show more oomph late. GRADE: X.

CONCLUSION

I think **#8 SMART CODE (9/2)** is going to run a big one second off the bench—and 9/2 is a fair price on him. **#5 NEWS AT TEN (GB) (2/1)** is also sitting on a big race, but he's a much shorter price. If you want a fuzzy in here: **#7 FIFTH STREET (20/1)** could be a whole new animal getting on turf for an excellent turf trainer. I've seen worse 20/1 shots!

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