

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

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Date: 9/8/24

Race 11: \$40K optional-claiming/N1X for fillies and mares going 8.5-furlongs on turf (rails at 0-ft.)

Post: approx. post 6:32 p.m. PDT

OVERVIEW

It's only fitting that we end this year's online contest with another oversubscribed turf race, Race 11, a \$40K optional-claiming/N1X for fillies and mares going 8.5-furlongs on the turf with the rails at zero feet. This should be a good one.

#1 ANDIAMO RAGAZZA (8/1) broke my heart a few weeks ago when I touted Long Mayshe Reign at 15/1 on Kurt Hoover's simulcast show. My gal led all the way until this one uncorked a nice rally to tag her on the line. That was a 5-furlong turf sprint, so we'll see how she stretches out today. She might be a closing sprinter, so I'm fine watching one against some proven routers. GRADE: X.

#2 CORNELIA FORT (6/1) is an honest horse, but this Cal-bred has had her chances at this N1X level and hasn't been able to get the job done. She'll run her race as she usually does, but that probably won't be good enough once again. GRADE: X.

#3 RUGELACH (3/1) gets bet off the board every time, and she's burned so much money when racing at this level that it was nice to see her backers finally get rewarded when she dropped into a \$40K claimer and wired the field. She'll be prominent again early, but if her track record at this level is any indication of her win chances, 3/1 is a terrible price. GRADE: C.

#4 ABHITA (30/1) will try blinkers to shake things up today, but I'm not sure that's going to help a Cal-bred who couldn't beat starter foes four back. She needs a big step forward. GRADE: X.

#5 LADY CLAYPOOLE (IRE) (20/1) was 27/1 at this level and distance last time and she ran a blah sixth. She was coming off a layoff, so she can do better today, but note that her only win came on good ground and there is no way she will get cut in the ground today. GRADE: X.

#6 GRACE PERIOD (FR) (15/1) looks overmatched on paper, unable to win races up north or at Turf Paradise. The blinkers come off, but I'm not sure that is the answer. Three back, she was 43/1 at this level and she flattened out going 9-furlongs. She'll need to do better today, but I do think the slight cutback will help. Maybe for underneath. GRADE: C.

#7 SHOCKING GREY (8/1) looks pretty solid to me. This Cal-bred ran a much-improved race at this level last time when coming off a very long layoff. Mullins is having a great meet, and I can see this one moving forward big-time. I'm not a fan of Smith on the turf, but he can win if he's on the best horse. This gal might be the best horse in the race. GRADE: A.

#8 PLEASANT WAVE (20/1) has some form from back in the day, but she's a bit of a plodder who just runs on late to pass tired horses. I liked that Baltas tried her in the Possibly Perfect last time going 10-furlongs because she acts like a stayer, but that competition was too tough for her. Maybe she can grind along for a slice. GRADE: C.

#9 MAHINA (12/1) has run a mixed bag of races at this level, but she is really pace-dependent as she lacks any early foot. She'll come running on late, but there isn't a lot of pace signed on here, so I think the minor awards are her ceiling, if you're a believer. GRADE: X.

#10 ANNIE'S JOY (15/1) should be the one setting the pace, since she has no choice but to gun hard and make the running from out there. Speed has been kind over this turf course, but I think it's going to be tough to wire this field. That said, you know I love Mark Glatt horses off a layoff (though a lot more in sprint races). GRADE: C.

#11 SPECIAL FLOWER (6/1) was impressive in victory when she debuted at 5-years-old and took down a 6-furlong turf sprint at Santa Anita. That came back in March, however, and she needed some time off. For a gal who is fragile, that's not a good thing. Clearly, she must have plenty of ability for them to keep racing her...and for Hernandez to take the call, but this is a tough post and a tough spot. I'll let her beat me. GRADE: C.

#12 MONTJICA (FR) (4/1) has a nice foundation from her overseas races, and I like that she's been prominent early on in her races, so she should have enough speed to angle over and get decent position. Glatt is excellent with imports, so I think this one has a big shot. The post might be her undoing, however. GRADE: A.

#13 IRRESISTIBLE FORCE (20/1) (AE) should appreciate a stretch out back to two turns. She's run some good races at a mile. She has speed, and she's tenacious—but if she gets in, the post does her no favors. She'll have to go hard from out here, and I think that will soften her up late. GRADE: X.

#14 BIG MAMA SUE—program scratch.

CONCLUSION

There are no standouts in here, so you should have plenty of places to land. Sometimes it's not who you like...it's who you need. My top pick is #7 **SHOCKING GREY (8/1)**. Let's go!

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