

DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY

By Frank R. Scatoni

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Date: 11/10/24

Race 7: \$25K claimer contested at 5-furlongs on the turf with the rails at 18-feet.

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

OVERVIEW

Today's contest race is a very competitive \$25K claimer contested at 5-furlongs on the turf with the rails at 18-feet. As is typical with these short races, trip is of paramount importance.

#1 INSTINCT D' ORO (20/1) has speed and is breaking from the rail, so you know exactly what the plans are for this guy. That said, there are other speed horses in here, and this guy's one turf race was no bueno (albeit, it came against tougher). GRADE: X.

#2 PATRON D'ORO (6/1) wired \$20K foes two back going 5.5-furlongs on dirt. It was a sharp effort, but these are slightly better animals, and we all know the surface is not the same. His one turf try is kind of inconclusive because he had some trouble, but he's going to have to gun from this inside post, and that will likely compromise his chances. GRADE: X.

#3 MY SUMMER DREAM (5/2) was a surprising 6/1 at this level last time, and he ran too good to lose, finishing third and missing by a neck. He had to break from the 10-hole, while today he gets a far better post. His two races since coming back after a long layoff have been really good. I see no reason why he won't be right there again today. GRADE: A.

#4 INCH (10/1) has been facing much tougher competition, so I won't be too harsh on his blah form. If you go back far enough, you'll see that he has several decent races at levels similar to this, but then again, they were for a different trainer. Can this guy get back to his winning ways? Maybe. He makes the second start of his form cycle and drops in class. GRADE: B.

#5 CANE CREEK ROAD (7/2) has run creditably against better animals, so he should be competitive here on the drop. The best turf jock in the colony takes the call, and this one has enough tactical speed to get the right trip. GRADE: A.

#6 EASTBOUND (20/1) hasn't been able to beat conditional-claimers, so Ganbat will take off the hood and leg up a five-pound bug-boy to see if those changes can help get this one get over the hump. GRADE: X.

#7 GIVE ME THE LUTE (6/1) ran some really nice races here over the summer, so he could easily wake up thanks to the fresh Del Mar sea air. I'm willing to excuse the two bad Santa Anita races, but it is a bit concerning that D'Amato couldn't get a win with him at this level. Still, a repeat of that Del Mar race three back is good enough to win this, if you're a believer. GRADE: C.

#8 HOT BOX (15/1) came off the bench and ran a corker against tougher horses here over the summer but just missed. His two races after that at this level weren't nearly as good. He's regressed in each start since that big race, but I do like that Fresu takes the call, since he's riding really well, and this guy does seem to really like Del Mar. GRADE: B.

#9 HELLADIC (12/1) takes off the hood, but he still has sharp early speed. This guy has been a one-way train, and there was a time when he was knocking heads with much better horses. Clearly, those days are behind him; he was 7/1 at this level and distance over the summer, and he made the running but weakened to finish fifth. If he were drawn inside, I might like him a bit—but from out here, he's going to use a lot of energy to try and clear, and I think that takes its toll late. GRADE: C.

#10 DR. SOULFIRE (5/1) was claimed for \$30K by D'Amato, and he doesn't often dip into the claim box. I respect the fact that he took this guy, but at the same time, there are a few things that concern me. First off, when good trainers claim, their intention is to move the horse up in class because they see something that the previous trainer maybe hasn't noticed. This horse is dropping in price. Secondly, this horse lacks early speed, so he'll need so many things to go right. GRADE: C.

CONCLUSION

As you can see, I like the two obvious horses: **#3 SUMMER DREAM (5/2)** and **#5 CANE CREEK ROAD (7/2)**—but they won't be much use in the contest. If you're looking for prices, I can see **#4 INCH (10/1)** and **#8 HOT BOX (15/1)** outrunning their odds.

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