DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY
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Date: 11/15/24
Race 8: $100K optional-claiming/conditional-allowance for F&M going 8F on turf (rails at 24-ft.)
Post: approx. post 4:03 p.m. PST

OVERVIEW

We've got a really nice $100K optional-claiming/conditional-allowance race for fillies and mares going one mile on the lawn with the rails at 24-feet. There should be an honest pace in here, so I'm expecting a fairly run race, but this is a big field, so don't be surprised if some horses encounter traffic trouble with the rails out so far. Also, note the condition: it's basically an N2X, but there is a clause that gives eligibility to horses who have not won $40K since January 1, 2023, which allows one horse to sneak in.

#1 ROYAL CHARTER (GB) (5/1) was even-money at this level here over the summer, and she just missed. She's been facing tougher since then, so she'll appreciate some class relief, but more importantly, she'll get to save ground with the rails out. Also note that Kimura has been riding lights out. GRADE: A.

#2 GRACELUND GRAY (7/2) fits the condition, since she already has a win at this level, but she's winless since, and that's partly because she's been facing some tough customers. She's been freshened since April, and her best races are easily fast enough to win this. That said, she does like to be forwardly placed, and there is a lot of speed outside of her, so Fresu will have to adjust accordingly. Plus, this could be a prep for a stakes race next time. GRADE: B.

#3 SNEAKER (8/1), the first Papaprodromou entrant, was sharp wiring fellow sophomores two back at Santa Anita. She followed that up with a respectable fourth in the age-restricted Autumn Miss (G3), where she showed she could pass horses. That said, her best work has come on the engine, and there are other speed horses in here. Plus, she's facing open older foes for the first time. GRADE: X.

#4 TAHINI (10/1), the second Papaprodromou runner, looks a lot like her stablemate, but she went off slightly lesser than that foe in the Autumn Miss (G3), and then she ran a lot worse. She likes to be forwardly placed in her route races, and that's going to be an issue in here. She's also facing older winners for the first time. GRADE: X.

#5 YERWANTHERE (IRE) (4/1) has a solid late kick, and she should get something to run at here. She's been knocking on the door at this level, and I see no reason why she shouldn't run another good one as the best closer in the race. GRADE: A.

#6 WELL INTO (15/1) has speed and adds blinkers, so this East Coast invader seems up against it in here with an anticipated quick early pace. If Valdivia can somehow get her to relax, she would be in with a

shot, since I think this 4-year-old still has more to give, but I just don't think the race shape favors her. GRADE: C.

#7 PARIS SECRET (IRE) (20/1), the first D'Amato runner, has been 18/1 and 41/1 at this level against a few of these, and she's basically just run along with the pack. You can never count out a D'Amato trainee, but this gal looks to need lesser to shine based on her paper form, even though she is a Grade 3 winner. GRADE: C.

#8 ANG N ASH (8/1) is a very sharp 3-year-old who is a neck away from having won four in a row. That said, she has been facing lesser foes while sprinting. This is a whole new ballgame today. I trust Berrios to give her a decent trip, but she's probably going to sit closer than she likes, since she's stretching out. If she wins, I'll applaud. GRADE: X.

#9 REAL FIRE (12/1) went off form this summer, but she did just change barns, and her first start for Miller was better than it looks on paper. She made a mess of the start, yet she kept to task and actually finished up really nicely. Still, she could only manage sixth—and that was against N1X types. The waters get deeper today—and note that J. J. sides with another. GRADE: X.

#10 SPEED LANE—program scratch.

#11 LEISUREWEAR (IRE) (6/1), the second D'Amato trainee, has run just okay at this level, but she does have a few excuses. That said, Yerwanthere (Ire) has her on form, and that foe has a much better post and pace set-up than this gal does. I like that J. J. keeps the faith here in SoCal, but I still think this gal is looking at a wide stalking journey. GRADE: C.

#12 FREE AND HUMBLE (20/1), the second Miller charge, gets a 5-pound weight-break, and she'll need it, since she seems a cut below the best in here based on her spring form. Perhaps she'll move forward as a fresh horse, but the bug boy will have to work out a good trip from a tough post, so I'm fine letting this gal beat me. GRADE: X.

CONCLUSION
I think this is a two-horse race: **#1 ROYAL CHARTER (GB) (5/1)** and **#5 YERWANTHERE (IRE) (4/1)** should get good set-ups, and both have proven proficiency at this level and also against better animals.

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