DEL MAR FEATURED RACE OF THE DAY
By Frank R. Scatoni
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Date: 11/17/24
Race 7: $100K optional-claiming/N2X contested at one mile on the lawn (rails at 12-feet)
Post: approx. post 3:30 p.m. PST

OVERVIEW

We've got two really competitive contest races today to sink our teeth into. The first is a very competitive $100K optional-claiming/N2X contested at one mile on the lawn. There are some good horses in here, making this a very competitive race.

#1 EL POTENTE (3/1) turned into a new horse when he moved to the turf. This former claimer has been very sharp, and his tactical speed always makes him a threat, especially when drawing the rail. Unfortunately, there are other horses in here who will ensure a quick pace, so the race shape doesn't really favor him. He's fast enough to win, but I think he gets overtaken late. GRADE: C.

#2 ZIO JO (6/1) has a very good late kick, so he'll have every chance to do some damage in a race that should have a quick pace. I like that he beat N1X foes pretty convincingly last time, but these are tougher animals, and I am concerned that this guy was risked for $62.5K when he broke his maiden. Still, his come-home times are legit. GRADE: B.

#3 IRISH PROPHET (12/1) should not be 12/1. Two back at this level, he finished second at 3/1 and came home really fast. Unfortunately, it was a slow pace, and he was unable to reel in the pacesetter. I think that last race at Belmont at Aqueduct was likely a prep for something more suitable. He might be a little slow on paper, but he looks sneaky to me. GRADE: A.

#4 OLD PAL (5/2) owes me a lot of money! But it's my own fault for relying on a deep closer to get the job done. He will one of these days, and today might be the day, since he should be fit cutting back from longer races. I also think the jock change from Smith to Fresu is a positive, even though Smith sticks with another contender. He's a legit threat, but 5/2 doesn't seem too exciting in a race with a lot of horses who look very similar. GRADE: B.

#5 PACKS A WAHLOP (8/1) had a promising juvenile stretch while racing on turf. Something prompted a move to Kentucky, where he ran a mixed bag of races. Same can be said for his return to SoCal, but his races against allowance foes were alright. He's in for the $100K tag, so he fits the condition well, and note that Mike Smith chose this one over Old Pal. GRADE: A.

#6 MUBTADAA (7/2) has sprint speed, so he should be prominent early. It's tough to wire foes going a mile at Del Mar; plus, there should be a decent amount of speed in here. He's run some big figs

while sprinting, and it's nice to see Hernandez stick around, but I want no part of him if he's 7/2. GRADE: C.

#7 MAS RAPIDO (12/1) has been solid as a closing sprinter, but the last time he ran a flat mile was a long time ago when he just ran evenly in the Oceanside as a 3-year-old. Papaprodromou has made all the right moves the last few months, but I'm having a hard time seeing this one in the winner's circle. GRADE: X.

#8 STORM THE COURT (30/1) rejoins the Eurton barn after a long time away from SoCal. His form is very confusing with sprints and routes sprinkled in at various venues. I think it's interesting that Eurton is running this 7-year-old in such a competitive race, but I have to watch one, considering his 0-for-15 record on turf. GRADE: X.

#9 LORD BULLINGDON (12/1) can't possibly be 12/1 right? Even if he's half that price, I'm interested. I know he's a 3-year-old facing elders for the first time, but he's been freshened up off a May layoff, and he gets Lasix for the first time. This horse has a lot of upside, and his come-home times from last year are way above par. He's the value of the race. GRADE: A.

CONCLUSION
I don't typically like to have three "A" horses in a race, but they are all good prices, and I think they all have solid chances to win. If I had to list them in order of preference, I'd go: **#9 LORD BULLINGDON (12/1)**, **#5 PACKS A WAHLOP (8/1)**, **#3 IRISH PROPHET (12/1)**.

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Date: 11/17/24
Race 9: $50K starter-allowance/N3L for fillies and mares going 8F on turf (rails at 12-feet)
Post: approx. post 4:30 p.m. PST

OVERVIEW

The second contest race today also offers some interesting possibilities. It's a $50K starter-allowance/N3L for fillies and mares going one mile on the lawn with the rails at 12-feet. There should be an honest pace.

#1 BEAUTY N THE BOLT—program scratch.

#2 CAMERON SLOUGH (5/1) should be super fit cutting back from a 10-furlong turf affair against better animals, where she finished second. She's a logical contender. GRADE: A.

#3 SOLID TUNE (30/1) has been sprinting against weaker horses, and it's not like she's been dominating. She does have okay turf form from back in the day, so I have to think that Marquez is moving her to the lawn to try and wake her up. I'm fine watching one. GRADE: X.

#4 ANNIE'S JOY (8/1) will never be 8/1. I'm completely baffled by this line. She's been facing better foes, and she was only three-quarters of a length from beating N1X foes last time at 5/1. This is an infinitely weaker group, and if you go back to January, you'll see that she was odds-on at this level. Granted, she didn't win, but she was forced to go from the rail. She has more options today with her tactical run style. GRADE: A.

#5 SUPER ENTICING (20/1), the first Miller runner, is a 3-year-old who drops in class but has to face older runners instead of the sophomores she's been facing the last two times. Those N1X races don't look that good on paper, but her final times in those races are pretty darn good. She gets a 5-pound weight-break, and she should move forward in her second start off the bench. I've seen worse 20/1 shots. GRADE: B.

#6 PRINCESS MIDNIGHT (12/1) seems to have some distance limitations, so even though she looked good last time when beating starter/optional-claimers, that was a turf sprint. Her one mile races from back in the day are all pop-and-stop performances. She looks like a pace factor only to me. GRADE: X.

#7 KATERINI (4/1), the second Miller entrant, ran two respectable races at this level for Knapp, but now she moves to the Miller barn, and the blinkers promptly come off. Even with that equipment change, this horse should be forwardly placed, and that might take its toll late. GRADE: C.

#8 RASHMI (2/1) was dominant at a similar level last time when crushing five other starter foes at 6/5. She stalked the pace and then drew off to win easily. As nice as a performance as that was, she was supposed to beat that group after running a good second against allowance foes the race before up at Woodbine. She is in good form right now, but note that she just raced on November 8, and this is a quick turnaround for a turf horse. She's a contender, but she doesn't offer much value under these circumstances. GRADE: B.

#9 KETONIA (FR) (9/2) has flashed some quick come-home times in her N1X races against her fellow sophomores, so she figures to be coming late today. Ellis has done well off the claim for this gal, but I'm wondering what kind of trip she'll get from this post. She broke from this post two back, and she was hooked wide the whole time. She still ran a good third, but third place doesn't help us any in the contest. GRADE: C.

#10 RUN FOR MY HONEY (20/1) seems up against it today from a class perspective. This horse hasn't been able to beat weaker company while racing on dirt. Her last turf race came at a similar level as this, and she finished last. Granted, her post was terrible, but she was 69/1, so no one gave her a shot. She should be a longshot again today. I respect the connections, but a win for this gal would be a surprise. GRADE: X.

#11 SEPTEMBER MAGIC (10/1) made an easy lead in a six horse field and never looked back, beating similar types at 4/1. Things won't be as easy today, so we'll see how this one does under different circumstances. I do like that she ran a career best when racing on turf for the first time last time, but she had nary a straw in her path in that wire victory. I'll let her beat me. GRADE: X.

CONCLUSION
I think **#2 CAMERON SLOUGH (5/1)** gets the right ground-saving trip, so she's my top pick, but if **#4 ANNIE'S JOY (8/1)** goes off at this morning-line, she's the contest play. I think she'll be half the price, but you never know.

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