Handicapping Analysis
Mon September 1st, 2025

Emily's Analysis

Del Mar Race 2

Post Time 4:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 IL BELLATOR has been struggling to find the right spot since their March win. This lands them back under similar allowance conditions and par while also returning to the main track. The change in dynamic should suit their runstyle and bring in fitness second off and from a TROUBLE_S WIDE trip along with a rider change following the TACTIC- as well.

Del Mar Race 3

Post Time 4:33 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

A subtle extreme dynamic with the Fire/75 SpeedRate comes into play. While those conditions can suit one of the projected favorites, #10 VEGAS LOVE, the outside draw is a slight shift from their recent races and with the pattern of gate (SLOG, RUSH) issues. The dynamic could be less favorable to #6 DANZING CAT and #8 CHASING KAT - both Q1 Circles.

#7 STELLAR CAP brings in current and standard form as a value alternative. They can be upgraded as a Q1 Square and might not be one that "needs the lead" given the complexion of this field, prior starts and now second off with a rider change.

A contentious pace brings "longshot" #4 THIRSTY DESTINY into the mix. The show a similar Surface/Distance Q4 Square Plot position/shape to VEGAS LOVE. In terms of form cycle, THIRSTY DESTINY on the upswing of their current "every other" pattern paired with the subtle change in class from open company back to restricted N3 and a lower tag.

Del Mar Race 5

Post Time 5:35 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 ZIMBA WARRIOR turned in a competitive B- OptixGRADE effort back on 7/18 with a less than ideal trip likely playing a role in the outcome. Freshened for that start and with intent some regression along with the WIDE trip and front wrap addition on 8/16 appeared to play a role in that race outcome and C+ OptixGRADE. They wheel back here, positive form cycle pattern and even intent with today's rider change.

Del Mar Race 6

Post Time 6:05 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 IRISH WHISKEY brings upside and further intent into this spot. They debuted with a higher race par back in March at OP and claimed still requiring class DROP in April. They improved with the change in class on 5/2 showing run/MOVE with a less than ideal TRAFFIC trip in their first two turn attempt. Requiring some time off they returned last month, the higher $50k MCL turf event along with timing suggested they could benefit from a start. The 8/8 race given slight flow upgrade along with the class change and conditioning while still ship-and-win eligible with the lowest par of their career thus far should allow for their best chance today.

Del Mar Race 11

Post Time 8:35 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Looking at alternatives to the projected favorites - horses that make sense through could hold questionable value: #12 OAKLEY SMILE is the one horse in this field with the big class change first time in for a tag. They improved second off going back to the spring form cycle with the B- OptixGRADE on 5/10. Similar intent could follow here second off and should be overlooked for the connections and with the distance change.

A group returning from the 8/8 common race: #10 POOR CONNECTION projected to move up with the STRETCH out in distance going back to their DMR debut last summer. With the time off that followed, they stepped up with the two-turns last month and given a flow upgrade as part of the early DUEL on a Very Fast early pace from the rail/SAVED. #7 BROTHER BROTHER from their 7/18 debut showed ROUTER physical characteristics to move up with the STRETCH/PREP. #4 MAKUTU was upgraded off sneaky form and intent last month and ran to it; though shorter odds projected here coming back from that 30.8-1 place finish.