

Friday, November 20, 2026

INTRO

It was tough to get into a groove last weekend due to bad weather, so let's hope Mother Nature cooperates with us for the rest of the Del Mar Bing meet. Regardless of today's weather, however, I thought this sequence was a pretty tricky one, anchored by two maiden races on turf and an unreliable low-level claimer in the middle.

I plan on treading lightly given the unknowns, but I might change my mind if I can sniff out some strong market signals before Race 6 (which is loaded with first-time starters).

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DEL MAR MATRIX

This analysis is for ON TURF only. All bets are off if the races come off the turf.

RACE 6: $3 LATE P3 (LEG 1):

We kick off the player-friendly $3 Late P3 with a **Maiden Special Weight for 2-year-old fillies sprinting 5-furlongs on the lawn with the rails at 30-feet.**

This is a tough way to begin the sequence because we have a bunch of first-time starters in the main body of the field, several of whom are trained by capable horsemen. The experienced runners haven't exactly distinguished themselves, though a few have shown enough on turf to suggest they can win at this level (eventually). The key will be figuring out which newcomers are ready to fire and whether the experienced runners have enough of an edge to hold them off.

#1 CINNAMOROLL (5/1) is a first-time starter by Charlatan who has been working steadily for Victor Garcia. She has shown some speed in the mornings, including a sharp half-mile gate drill on October 26, and Maldonado is exactly the kind of rider who can make use of that speed from the rail. Garcia's first-out numbers aren't especially compelling, but he has had some success with turf sprinters, and the dam has been a productive turf influence. I wouldn't be surprised to see this gal involved from the outset, and she could prove difficult to catch if she breaks sharply. GRADE: B.

#2 SOUFRIERE (5/1) is a daughter of American Pharoah making her debut for Richard Mandella, who calls on Rosario—and that's certainly an attractive combination. Mandella has respectable numbers with first-time turf runners (plus, the dam was all turf, and she has produced a turf winner as well). Her recent works haven't been especially flashy, but that's not necessarily a negative for this barn. I suspect she'll be ready to run a professional race, and the inside draw should allow Rosario to save ground before asking her for her best. GRADE: A.

#3 MIZ LYDIA (8/1) is another first-time starter, this one by Yaupon for O.J. Jauregui. She has shown some ability in her morning drills, but the trainer's first-out and turf numbers are uninspiring. She could certainly outrun her odds, but I prefer others. GRADE: C.

#4 MAYFLOWER GIRL (6/1), the first Hess entrant, has already had two chances to graduate against some pretty serious company. She ran a respectable fifth at Kentucky Downs two back in her debut, before failing badly on dirt at Keeneland. Now she returns to turf and cuts back to 5-furlongs, which could be just what she needs. Rosario sides with a firster, however. GRADE: B.

#5 TODAYISAGOODDAY (8/1), the second Hess runner, makes her turf debut after showing good early speed before fading badly on the dirt at Ellis back in July. That speed could prove dangerous in here, assuming she can handle a surface switch to the lawn (she does have one winning sibling on turf). Pace factor only or solid contender? Tough call. GRADE: B.

#6 BERKEY (6/1), the second Mandella debutante, attracts Mike Smith for the unveiling, and that's a sign that this horse might have some ability. She has been training consistently, including a solid 5-furlong gate work two back. She also has a speedy 4-furlong work on her tab, so I expect her to be ready. Will this homebred be good enough? Her dam won her debut going 5-furlongs on turf, so there's that. GRADE: A.

#7 THE WHOLE TRUTH (7/2) is another newcomer in with a shot. D'Amato, while not great with his firsters, has done excellent work with turf sprinters, and he calls on Rispoli, who knows exactly how to handle these short grass races. Her recent 5-furlong gate work two back was encouraging, and she's been training regularly for a barn that doesn't need to rush its young horses. The outside draw should give Rispoli options, and I like that she's a daughter of Bucchero, who was a very good turf sprinter himself (and there is some turf on the dam side as well). GRADE: A.

#8 FURIOSITY (4/1) is a $450K Into Mischief filly trained by Baffert, so she's going to attract plenty of attention, especially with Hernandez aboard. Her two dirt starts were disappointing, but Baffert has given her some time since that September race to right the ship. I don't think turf was the original plan, considering the money she took on dirt, but Baffert is solid with his first-turf runners (if you can believe that!). My concern is that if she's live, she won't offer much value. GRADE: B.

#9 MISS ATHENS (15/1) (AE), another Baffert, hasn't shown much in two dirt starts, and her most recent effort going a mile was particularly rough. Baffert now cuts her back and tries turf for the first time, but her previous performances don't inspire much confidence. She would need to improve dramatically to be competitive. That said, the dam was all turf, and she has produced a turf winner (who is also a stakes winner on synth, Blazing Tiger, owned by our friends at Adelphi Racing Club!). GRADE: B.

#10 QUEENOFTHEWILD (IRE) (8/1) (AE) was pitched too high by D'Amato in her U.S. debut, trying stakes foes at a mile after just two 5-furlong turf sprints overseas. Last time, she ran an okay race to finish fourth going 6.5-furlongs at Santa Anita, chasing the pace before tiring. She should be fit and ready to go third off the bench, but this is her third jock in three tries now, and she's likely looking at a wide stalking trip if she gets in. GRADE: C.

#11 STAR ABOVE ME (IRE) (8/1) (AE) made a mess of her U.S. debut after a slow start, so I won't be too harsh, since she did take some money, going off at 5/1 in an 11-horse field. Her debut race in Ireland was pretty good, so she deserves another shot. Callaghan tries blinkers today, but that isn't his best move, so maybe let's watch one with an eye toward next time. GRADE: C.

#12 VALLENDAR (6/1) (AE) is the most accomplished runner among the also-eligibles, having finished in the money in three of four starts, including a strong third at Del Mar in August. She also missed by a nose at Santa Anita two back and has demonstrated an

ability to finish. She's an obvious contender, but the post does her no favors if she gets in. GRADE: B.

A: 6,2,7
B: 4,8,5,1,9(AE),12(AE)

RACE 7: $3 LATE P3 (LEG 2); $5 LATE DOUBLE (LEG 1):
Leg 2 of the $3 Late P3 is also Leg 1 of the $5 Late Double, and we've got a **$25K claiming race for 3-year-old fillies contested at 6-furlongs on the main track.**

This is an interesting race because several of these fillies have demonstrated enough ability to win at this level, but there are some serious questions about class, current form, and the projected pace, with a few of these who prefer to be prominent early. I am planting a flag here for my top line, but that doesn't mean others can't win.

#1 TIOSIMAGE (5/1) is a three-time winner who was absolutely dominant in her last two starts at Emerald Downs before shipping south and getting trounced against tougher Cal-bred allowance types at Santa Anita. Which gal shows up today? She has speed and the rail: is that enough to recapture that sharp Emerald Downs form, or is that recent SoCal start more indicative of her status on this tougher circuit? The answer probably lies somewhere in between. GRADE: B.

#2 SNAPSHOT (15/1) finally broke her maiden in her fourth start, winning a Cal-bred $12.5K maiden-claimer at Los Alamitos. She did it with a nice tactical trip but against much lesser competition. GRADE: X.

#3 FOREVER N LOVE (20/1) has won three times, but those victories came against much weaker opposition at smaller tracks. Her recent form has been poor, and she hasn't demonstrated the speed necessary to compete with these Southern California runners. That said, Mendez pops every now and again with horses like this (based at Dixie Downs), so she might be worth considering to start your Late Doubles. GRADE: B.

#4 WATCH OVER US (5/2) is an obvious contender after winning two of four starts, including a $25K/N2L conditional-claimer on Santa Anita turf two back. She followed that with a respectable fourth against $30K/N3L types, also on turf, and now Miller brings her back to dirt while adding blinkers. She broke her maiden on Los Al dirt, and Miller wins 21

percent of the time with turf-to-dirt runners and another 21 percent with blinkers-on horses, so those are meaningful angles. J.J. stays put. GRADE: A.

#5 SWIMMINGLY (4/1) just broke her maiden at Santa Anita, winning a $20K maiden-claimer in her fifth start. She showed a nice ability to sit off the pace and finish in a race that had the right flow for her style. Callaghan claimed her out of that race and now moves her up against winners. She also gets Lasix for the first time, and Rosario takes the call. She looks like a gal who still has room to improve against this kind of company. GRADE: B.

#6 JASMINA (3/1) is another three-time winner who has demonstrated that she can handle this level. She won a $20K/N3L claimer at Los Alamitos two back, and she has the tactical speed to be in a great spot throughout. Her most recent effort against tougher allowance types was disappointing, but she was involved in a fast pace and faded, so I'm willing to forgive that race. She also returns to claiming company, where she has been most effective. GRADE: B.

#7 BEAR'S BOARD (8/1) is coming off a victory against $16K/N3L claimers at Santa Anita, where she went right to the front and held on gamely going a mile. All three of her wins have come going a mile while loose on the lead, and that's obviously not the case today, but she's a pretty honest gal who is versatile enough to get the right trip in here. Is she good enough? She's been running for $16K, so we'll find out if she's worth the $22.5K she's in for today. GRADE: C.

#8 EVA LEA (6/1) is a two-time winner who has been competing exclusively on turf. Her recent form isn't especially inspiring, but she's been squaring off against much tougher older ladies. The last time she ran exclusively against fellow sophomores, she won for $32K (albeit on turf and for Sadler). McLean, who took her two back for $32K, will try turf to shake things up. Jaramillo stays put. Sneaky? GRADE: B.

A: 4
B: 8,1,5,6,3

RACE 8: $3 LATE P3 (LEG 3); $5 LATE DOUBLE (LEG 2):
Today's pay leg is a **Cal-bred Maiden Special Weight for 2-year-olds contested at one mile on the lawn with the rails at 30-feet.**

A few of these have already faced each other, so it's time for one of them to step up and graduate. Which one?

#1 SOUTHERN BOY (30/1) didn't show much in his debut sprinting on turf at Santa Anita, where he was beaten eight lengths after racing near the back of the field. Now Ivory stretches him out to a mile, but his numbers with that move are uninspiring. GRADE: X.

#2 MISSED FORTUNE (5/1) has been knocking on the door without quite getting there, and his most recent fifth came at the hands of a few of today's foes, who finished ahead of him (despite the fact that he went off favored). Note that he showed speed over this course three back, so you can expect an extremely aggressive ride from hungry jock Americano—and Papaprodromou is lethal with speedy types around two turns on turf. GRADE: B.

#3 ENJOY THE RIDE (7/2) had trouble against a few of these last time, and that likely impacted his finish. Hanson goes to Rosario today, and that could be the difference between a win and another fourth-place finish. GRADE: B.

#4 BOTTLED IN BOND (5/1), the first Carla Gaines entrant, is stretching out to a mile after two turf sprints, and I think that's an interesting move for a horse who acts like he wants a route of ground (and I have a note from his debut that says exactly that). Berrios and Rosario swap mounts, but Berrios rode this guy in his debut, so he knows what he's dealing with. GRADE: A.

#5 SIMPLE MAJORITY (30/1) has had eight chances to break his maiden, and most of those have come against much weaker opposition. The one turf try was no good. Seems like a public workout for a more reasonable spot next time. GRADE: X.

#6 RED RAIDER (8/1) is another runner who has been trying to find his way, and his recent efforts haven't been especially encouraging (though he did face winners last time on dirt). Before that, his one turf route was a disappointment. GRADE: X.

#7 REPO (4/1) is the one to beat. He finished second at this level and distance last time against several of these, despite having to break from the 10-hole. He also has the right kind of tactical speed to make his own trip in a race that has a muddled pace on paper. GRADE: A.

#8 IS THAT YOU WING (4/1) is another obvious contender after finishing third, right behind Repo last time (from the 9-post). He hit the gate, got bumped, and raced wide, so his

performance was better than it looks on paper. He also finished sixth at Del Mar two back after making a premature move to take the lead (from the 10-hole), so there's reason to believe he can improve with a better trip. He could prove the best value if Repo gets overbet. GRADE: A.

#9 LIL PRINCE CAIRO (10/1), the second Gaines runner, has only raced twice, and neither effort was especially impressive. He finished sixth at this level and distance last time against several of these—and he was well beaten in his debut sprinting on turf at Del Mar. He's going to need to improve considerably to beat these, but do note that he shows up here a new gelding. GRADE: X.

#10 HALLAGREY (15/1) has shown some ability in his four starts, including a respectable third sprinting on turf here in August—but he's never been two turns, and the post does this stretch-out sprinter no favors. GRADE: X.

#11 TAPIT'S GHOST (20/1) (AE) didn't show much in his debut sprinting on turf at Santa Anita, where he finished seventh after breaking slowly. Now Alvarez stretches him out to a mile, but his numbers with that move are poor, and this colt hasn't demonstrated enough ability to suggest that major improvement is in the cards. GRADE: X.

#12 D'S FOUR THUMBS UP (6/1) (AE) ran a respectable fourth sprinting on turf at Santa Anita last time, making up ground in the lane. He deserves a try around two turns, but the post poses a big problem today. Watch one. GRADE: C.

#13 FULLY FAVORABLE (12/1) (AE) has shown some improvement in his two dirt starts, including a third at Santa Anita last time. Now Thomas tries turf for the first time while stretching him out to a mile, and that's asking quite a bit of a lightly raced youngster. Hernandez takes the call, which is interesting, but the trainer's numbers with turf runners are poor, and this colt hasn't shown enough ability to make me think he's ready for this assignment. GRADE: X.

A: 8,7,4
B: 2,3

[SCROLL DOWN FOR MATRIX]

THE MATRIX

DEL MAR: $3 LATE P3

DMR $3 LP3: Friday, 11/20/26	A	B
R6: Leg 1*	6,2,7	4,8,5,1,9(AE),12(AE)
R7: Leg 2	4	8,1,5,6,3
R8: Leg 3*	7,8,4	2,3
**For on turf only.*		
POTENTIAL WAGERS		
$3 LP3: 1,2,4,5,6,7,8 / 4 / 4,7,8 ($63)***	******ADD 9(AE),12(AE) if they draw in.***	
$3 LP3: 6,2,7 / 4 / 7,8,4 ($27)		
$3 LP3: 6,2,7 / 4 / 2,3 ($18)		
LP3 TOTAL: $108		

DEL MAR: $5 LATE DOUBLE

DMR $5 LDBL: Friday, 11/20/26	A	B
R7: Leg 1	4	8,1,5,6,3
R8: Leg 2*	8,7,4	2,3
**For on turf only.*		
POTENTIAL WAGERS		
$25 LDBL: 4 / 7,8,4 ($75)		
$10 LDBL: 4 / 2,3 ($20)		
$5 LDBL: 8,1,5,6,3 / 8 ($25)		
LDBL TOTAL: $120		

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