



Expert Analysis

By Brad Free

BEST BET: Latte Luv (3rd race)

First Race

1. Aleramo	2. Sakura Flavor	3. Sweet Delta Dawn
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First post Monday, 12 noon. Class dropper ~ALERAMO^ is the call in this N2L claiming turf route, the first time she has raced at a class level this low. Her maiden-50 win three back was strong; she was not good enough two subsequent starter allowance races. This field is easier, she has a productive trainer-jockey tandem. Michael McCarthy and Flavien Prat are 18-for-46 (39 percent) on turf the past five years. ~SAKURA FLAVOR^ also drops to the lowest level of her career. She finished a half-length in front of the top choice last out (seventh and eighth), and has a smidge more speed. ~SWEET DELTA DAWN^ drops from N1X and benefits by the slightly shorter 9f distance after tiring at 11 furlongs. TRUE PATRIOT might be ranked too low. Although she is 1-for-20 with six runner-up finishes, she finished in the money her last three tries at this level. EXINGTON is the speed of the field, adding blinkers and stretching out from a dirt sprint. She will lead as far as she can.

Second Race

1. Goodgollytizmolly	2. Billie Holiday	3. Christa McAuliffe
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First-time starter ~GOODGOLLYTIZMOLLY^, a Clubhouse Ride sibling to superior sprinter The Chosen Vron, has worked well enough to be considered live first out for trainer Ian Kruljac. Her dam won first time out, two of her four starters won first out including The Chosen Vron. The Dec. 6 gate work by TIZMOLLY was better than the published time according to socialworkoutreport.com, which timed the filly in 1:00.40 (published 1:02). ~BILLIE HOLIDAY^ returns from a three-month respite; she showed ability both starts in September, sixth with trouble after breaking from the rail, and third next out. Her work pattern is sporadic, but not unusual for trainer Steve Miyadi. 'HOLIDAY, by Grazen, is a sibling to stakes-placed Cal-breds Carmen Miranda and Tom Horn. Her stablemate ~CHRISTA MCAULIFFE^ is a full sibling to debut winner/stakes winner Rose Maddox. A GREAT SHAKING has speed, and could set the pace.

Third Race

1. Latte Luv	2. Total Val	3. La Ville Lumiere
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~LATTE LUV^ looks solid in this turf mile stakes for 2yo fillies, based on her runner-up finish in a G3 turf mile at Del Mar. 'LUV tucked off the pace, waited for room, and finished well behind winning favorite Just Aloof. Each start by 'LUV has been better than the start before; she could get a great trip positioned second behind the stretch-out sprinter in post 3. ~TOTAL VAL^ looms an upset candidate based on her last-to-first maiden upset last out in her first try on turf. She smoked her final quarter-mile in 23.06 seconds; the two-three finishers were expected to be the two favorites in a maiden race Sunday. 'VAL paid \$35.40 in her maiden win, but it was not a fluke. Her dam was a stakes-winning turf filly. The class hike from maiden to stakes is acceptable; four of the last nine winners of this race entered off maiden wins. ~LA VILLE LUMIERE^, a half-length behind LATTE LUV last out, is a McCarthy-Prat production who has faced top company this season. PEANUTBUTTERBOMBE is the aforementioned stretch-out sprinter expected to set the pace.

Fourth Race

1. Into the Hall	2. Lubie's Music	3. Manhattan Beauty
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Maiden filly ~INTO THE HALL^, beaten as the short-price favorite both recent starts and in the money four of six, returns to the Santa Anita surface on which she ran the two best races of her career: 84-Beyer runner-up in October, 86-Beyer third in April. Drawn outside with speed to set or press the pace, her top figures exceed the 76 Beyer par for this level. One more chance? ~LUBIE'S MUSIC^ finished only a nose behind the top choice last out at DMR in a promising debut. 'MUSIC is likely to improve second out, though she could be compromised by post position. She broke from an outside post in her debut, and now is stuck on the rail. Expect her to rally from behind. ~MANHATTAN BEAUTY^, previously based in New York, makes comeback for new trainer Richard Baltas. Her workouts suggest she is a better filly than she showed either start at Saratoga. First-time starter CONVO might be listed too low. She has worked fast; her stable can win with first-time starters.

Fifth Race

1. Mr. Leasure	2. Cathal	3. American Glory
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~MR. LEASURE^ is the tepid choice in this starter allowance turf mile, based on current form and pace. Except for the comebacker on his outside, this field does not include much speed. Even with blinkers off, MR. LEASURE could make the lead, or sit second. He is a difficult horse to handle, but in the money two of his last three starts at this N3L level. He might win with a front-running/pace-pressing trp. ~CATHAL^ has the opposite style. A late-runner, he needs the pace to come back. His last-out fourth was okay, this is his second start since being claimed by George Papaprodromou. The trainer is 16-for-60 (26 percent) second off the claim over the past four years. CATHAL will rally late. ~AMERICAN GLORY^ moves up a notch after a N2L win two months ago; SKETCHY might be listed too low. He finished second last out, in front of both MR. LEASURE and CATHAL. The aforementioned pace rival for the MR. LEASURE is comebacker CAPTAIN CHOCOLATES, who is making his first start in more than a year. He might need one.

Sixth Race

1. Tessuto	2. Thirty Two Chunk	3. Scatify
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Pace-presser ~TESSUTO^ and rail-drawn front-runner ~THIRTY TWO CHUNK^ top this starter allowance dirt sprint. TESSUTO drops from N1X; he starts for the \$50k optional claim tag in his second start following a late-season break. His fifth-place comeback at DMR was not bad, the figures he earned early this year against better are fast enough to handle this bunch, and he could get a great trip positioned just off the speed. THIRTY TWO CHUNK is the likely pacesetter, dropping from N1X and quick enough to make the front from the inside post. The last time he raced at this N2L starter level, he finished second with a 92 Beyer. If he runs back to that fig, he could be gone. The only time he ran at SA, he won a maiden race by more than eight lengths. Come and catch him. ~SCATIFY^ goes route to sprint, which seems his best distance. His runner-up finish two starts back at Los Alamitos puts him in the hunt; he should be forwardly placed.

Seventh Race

1. Motorious	2. El Potente	3. First Peace
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The G2 Joe Hernandez is scheduled for six and one-half furlongs on the hillside turf course. Horse for course ~MOTORIOUS^ is the choice to win the Hernandez for a second straight year. A late-running multiple graded winner, MOTORIOUS is 4-for-6 on the hill, dropping from a creditable fifth in the Breeders' Cup Turf Sprint at DMR. He benefits stretching from 5f to 6.5f, and can mow them down late. ~EL POTENTE^ has never raced on the hill, but the front-running miler might relish the trip. He ran well in his recent comeback at DMR, third in a G2 at a mile and a sixteenth. This shorter trip should be to his liking, the up-front style he employs at two turns suggests he will like this in-between distance. He is eligible to improve second start following a layoff. Also-eligible ~FIRST PEACE^ would merit longshot consideration if he draws in. He is a hillside specialist (three wins, three seconds), and better than either start this year suggests. Five furlongs was too short in his comeback, his training was interrupted due to foot issues his most recent start in September. He is back working well, and looms an upset candidate. FLYOVER continues to improve; he won back-to-back allowance races and will be involved in the pace scenario. IMAGINATON, G2 dirt winner and runner-up last out in the Breeders' Cup Sprint, might be listed too low. The fastest horse in the field based on recent dirt starts, this would be his first start on turf.

Eighth Race

1. Left Hand Man	2. Team Player	3. Known Idea
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A return to the main track benefits ~LEFT HAND MAN^ in this Cal-bred allowance dirt mile. 'MAN misfired both recent starts on turf, but his dirt form is terrific. He won fast claiming races this summer on dirt at DMR; his fourth-place finish in a stakes at LRC three back also was respectable. 'MAN has won on SA dirt and can return to form on preferred footing. Lightly raced ~TEAM PLAYER^ scored a sharp maiden sprint win last out; he finished second in his debut two back in a route race over this track. The return to two turns is fine, and he probably will be positioned in front of the top choice early. ~KNOWN IDEA^ also returns to preferred dirt footing after a creditable third on turf. He already won this Cal-bred dirt condition in a sprint; revised Cal-bred eligibility guidelines allow him to run back at the same class and surface, around two turns. 'IDEA has speed, and so does stretch-out sprinter STRONGERTHANBEFORE.

Ninth Race

1. Rio Grande	2. Essos	3. Charlie's Curlin
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Based on his runner-up finish last out in a turf mile at DMR, ~RIO GRANDE^ is the choice to win this maiden turf mile at SA. He was slow from the gate and purposely rated last out in his first route, but he picked up steam the far turn and into the lane, and finished well for second in a race won by heavily favored stablemate Plutarch. 'GRANDE has more speed than he produced last out; with a forwardly placed trip he is the one to beat. However, a longshot lurks. ~ESSOS^ is believed to be better than his eighth-place sprint debut suggests. He worked well going in, but based on his workouts, sprinting might not be his game. He broke slow from the inside post, and merely ran around the track first out. Now he stretches to a mile, with turf influence in his pedigree, He was 23-1 and finished eighth in his debut, therefore his price should be similarly high. Bombs away? ~CHARLIE'S CURLIN^ is a Curlin colt stretching out with a pair of sprints under his belt, while first-time starter MENDEL'S TUNE has shown ability in morning workouts.