



Expert Analysis

By Brad Free

BEST BET: Mayacama (10th race)

First Race

1. With Love

2. Aleramo

3. Time to Shine

~WITH LOVE^ has not raced since January 2024, but she was better than these starter allowance rivals before she was sidelined, and her works suggest she is ready to fire off the long layoff. She has been working in company with Namaron, a top stablemate entered in the race-5 Twilight Derby. If she fires first start back as expected, WITH LOVE can handle this N2L starter. ~ALERAMO^ scored a convincing maiden-50 win last out in just her second start of the season. The light bulb went on dropping in class; she figures as a contender moving up to face winners. ~TIME TO SHINE^ figures to vie for favoritism off back-to-back runner-up finishes vs. similar at Del Mar; WILLA T won a maiden-62.5k last out making her first start of the year. She probably won't get the same lone-f trip as last time, but she has run well from off the pace.

Second Race

1. Privman

2. Gaming

3. Pony Express

The Tokyo City Cup is shortened this year from a mile and one-half to one mile. Only four entered including Bob Baffert-trained Grade 1-placed ~PRIVMAN^ and Grade 1 winner ~GAMING^. The call is the "now" horse. PRIVMAN is good and getting better. Although still green, he improved each start since stretching to two turns including a creditable third last out in a G1. This ungraded race is a huge drop in class. GAMING won the G1 Del Mar Futurity as a 2yo, this year as a 3yo he won the Affirmed Stakes at Santa Anita over Nevada Beach, who subsequently upset the G1 Goodwood. GAMING followed with a disappointing third in a stakes at DMR, he enters as the most accomplished in the field. The comebacker ~PONY EXPRESS^ is fastest in the field based on the 101 Beyer he earned winning a N1X in June. That was his most recent start. He has worked fast for his comeback, and from the inside post will have to go. MINING DISTRICT, a supplemental entry, rounds out the quartet.

Third Race

1. Acknowledgemeplz

2. Easy Company

3. Blacksmith

~ACKNOWLEDGEMEPLZ^ ran super in his debut four months ago, runner-up in a fast, productive race won by subsequent graded winner Desert Gate; third place Proletariat won his next start, then placed in a G3. The point is, ACKNOWLEDGEMEPLZ ran well against a good field, and earned an 80 Beyer, which is high for a 2yo in June. Off since, 'PLZ returns with a solid workout pattern that suggests he is ready to fire. ~EASY COMPANY^ is a well-bred colt who has shown promise in morning works. Sired by Into Mischief, 'COMPANY was produced by a G2 winner who is a sibling to Kentucky Derby winner Authentic and G1 winner Hot Dixie Chick. 'COMPANY was a workmate last weekend for G1 winner Tamara, who is aiming to the Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Sprint. Tamara was best in the work, but 'COMPANY also worked well. He looks live first out. ~BLACKSMITH^ worked a sharp six furlongs from the gate Monday morning for a stable that sends its firsters out ready to roll.

Fourth Race

1. Into the Hall

2. Magnificat

3. Neko

Both dirt sprints by ~INTO THE HALL^ were fast in-the-money finishes, while her two turf starts were not great. Based on her runner-up comeback this summer on dirt at DMR, and her highly rated third-place finish on dirt this spring at SA, 'HALL is the one to beat in this MSW dirt sprint. She is quick enough to set the pace if she wants. ~MAGNIFICAT^ ran well in her debut this summer at DMR, runner-up in a turf sprint from which the first- and third-place finishers returned to win their next start. The surface switch to dirt adds uncertainty, but 'CAT has obvious ability and a pedigree that okays the footing. ~NEKO^ raced wide and went evenly for fourth in her debut this summer; she can improve. DONATA switches to dirt after finishing off the board her first two starts on turf.

Fifth Race

1. Test Score

2. Namaron

3. Scipio

East Coast shipper ~TEST SCORE^ is facing easier 3yo turf runners in this G2 than he has been facing all year. G1 winner three back, third in a G1 two back, he ships in off an even-paced fourth at Kentucky Downs. He benefits by the shorter distance and addition of blinkers. The class of the field, TEST SCORE is trained by East Coast-based Graham Motion, whose shippers to graded stakes this year in California are 3-for-6. ~NAMARON^ ran well in his U.S. debut, third in a stakes at KD that was his first start since May. He was green and uncertain early, but finished willingly and missed by less than two lengths. Solid try by a gelding who was purchased at a European auction for \$271k. The lightly raced import should have no trouble with the mile and one-eighth distance; two of his three wins were at a mile and a sixteenth. ~SCIPIO^, runner-up to TEST SCORE this spring in Kentucky, returns from a layoff of more than four months. SCIPIO is two-for-two on SA turf, and ready to fire first start back. SEPTEMBERSIXTYFOUR went too fast on the lead last time, and faded. Now that he has a route under his belt, he should be more settled. The speed of the field, he will lead as far as he can. MAAZ won the race in which SEPTEMBERSIXTYFOUR misfired.

Sixth Race

1. Tapalo

2. Drop Um

3. Don't Fly Stand By

This six-furlong dirt sprint is a new addition to the racing program; it is a "ratings race" in which eligibility is based on an algorithm-generated horse rating. This sprint is similar to a N2X, which suits ~TAPALO^. He misfired with wide trips both starts this summer at DMR; he may prefer SA. One-two in all three SA dirt sprints including a stakes, the challenge for TAPALO is post. He is buried on the rail, with speed to his outside in posts 2 and 5. If he can avoid being hounded into defeat, he can win despite the rail draw. It won't be easy. ~DROP UM^ is drawn directly outside the top choice, and returning to dirt after finishing seventh in a turf mile. A two-time stakes winner last year as a 2yo, DROP UM benefits by the return to dirt. He can sprint: four sprints produced 2 wins, 1 second and 1 third. ~DON'T FLY STAND BY^, multiple stakes-placed in the Southwest last year as a 2yo, has worked well since being claimed for \$16k by a high-percent first-off-the-claim outfit. LAST CALL ZONDLO is speed, facing tougher after finishing second in a Cal-bred N1X.

Seventh Race

1. Lunar Impact

2. Spicybug

3. Imaboutago

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This hillside turf sprint for fillies and mares is another "ratings race" in which eligibility is based on an algorithm-generated rating. This race resembles a classified/N3X allowance. It is the right spot for ~LUNAR IMPACT^, a hillside horse-for-course whose most recent start on the hill was a stakes romp in May. Her misfire last out in a G2 at Kentucky Downs can be forgiven; she was a 27-1 outsider and perhaps overmatched. Back with allowance company, racing over a course she likes, she has enough speed to tuck into a cozy trip right behind the pace. ~SPICYBUG^ is rounding into form, third start back from a layoff. She pressed and faded in her comeback, then improved next out to finish second in a turf mile won by next-out stakes winner Vibez. SPICYBUG is 3-for-4 in turf sprints at SA, all on the main oval. This is her first try on the hill. ~IMABOUTAGO^ is speed, directly outside the top choice and a threat on the front end. Not sure about six and one-half furlongs for her, however. It might be a reach.

Eighth Race

1. Rousing Jewel	2. Rose of Jericho	3. Danzing Cat
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Runner-up for \$10k claiming last out behind the odds-on favorite, ~ROUSING JEWEL^ drops to \$6,250 claiming as the unimaginative choice to add to her 5-for-22 career record. She is 2-for-4 when she started as the favorite. ~ROSE OF JERICO^ finished fourth last out, behind the top choice. 'JERICO will be running late. ~DANZING CAT^ and A ROUSING BABE are candidates to set the pace.

Ninth Race

1. Self Sufficient	2. Last Call Paul	3. No More Ding Dongs
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~SELF SUFFICIENT^ figures to start at a short price as he plummets in class to \$10k claiming N2L. He has never raced this low; his speed figures tower over the field. The obvious knock is the class descent two starts after being claimed for \$25k. ~LAST CALL PAUL^ needed 26 starts to finally win a maiden race two back; he was overmatched last time running for a \$25k claim tag but fits for \$10k. His maiden win this summer at DMR compares favorably to most in this field. ~NO MORE DING DONGS^ also drops to a new low. He finished in front of LAST CALL PAUL last time out. 'DING DONGS figures as one of the favorites.

Tenth Race

1. Mayacama	2. Tina Turner	3. Princesa Del Tigre
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~MAYACAMA^ has never been better, and fits perfect in this hillside turf sprint for Cal-bred fillies and mares. Her wire-to-wire N3L starter win last out was flattered when the second- and fourth-place finishers returned to win their next start. The distance cutback is fine for MAYACAMA, who ran well in short races last winter before stretching out on turf. Six and one-half furlongs on the hill should be just right. But she will have to catch debut winner ~TINA TURNER^. The latter overcame a slow start to win with a pressing trip. Sired by Grazen, the switch to turf makes sense. 'TURNER is likely to set the pace and has a shot to wire the field. ~PRINCESA DEL TIGRE^ goes route to sprint and should put in some sort of late rally. But the race probably goes through the top pair.