Handicapping Analysis
Fri February 10th, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Park Race 1

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 CATHOLIC GUILT picks up a live barn change (same owner) to run here back on this circuit. He has some legit early speed to suggest a pace advantage. In terms of form he had the double layoff lines to close out 2022 and recent series of works in a timely manner with a live rider to suggest intent for this race.

#2 EGO was a trainer scratch from a similar conditioned claiming event on 2/4 to run in this spot instead. That decision from Puhl could suggest intent all around and EGO holds the benefit of recency over some others in this field making his third start of the cycle.

#1 CASH ROCKET returns to make his second start of the meet and claimed from that 12/17 event by Contreras. Going back to that race, he was "bet down" from the 15-1 ML, though one could argue the line was off on the higher side. CASH ROCKET showed some run in spots after breaking slow from the rail though it was slightly concerning (and especially at shorter odds) to see him show up wearing first time front wraps that day. The barn does not have the strongest numbers first off the claim, though certainly capable in the right spot and this horse is capable on his best day in this spot.

Oaklawn Park Race 2

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 LUNCH LADY wheels right back for this second start of the meet. She returned off the 206-day layoff to a rough start (TROUBLE_S) and had to RUSH for position from the outside PRESSED on the lead before lacking (NO_FINISH) stick late. The return on short rest along with class relief, a rider change and even a potential pace advantage as positives here while a shorter number is to be expected.

#6 STEPONTHEFOOTFEET could have some "excuses" in her first two start from the debut running against open to make a race before the end of the year and with the wide trip against a higher maiden class two weeks ago. To her credit, she has shown improvement race to race and could present another step forward to move her up at this lower level. In terms of class, the change is more of a lateral move for **#5 FINISHWHATYOUSTARTED** another that has shown race to race progression and has had some "trips" in both events - the debut showing speed from the outside draw in a potential "PREP" and coming back on 1/14 with both TRAFFIC and TROUBLE playing a role in her effort and outcome. The change in class could also benefit **#7 SHEZA CAT** exiting Special Weight company. She has shown a pattern of gate issues (SLOG) breaking slow and should be factored again today from off the pace.

Oaklawn Park Race 3

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Robertson runners started to heat up last week and could look for that trend to carry here with **#1 SISAWAY NOW** as he appears well intended for her second start of the meet building off that conditioning along with finding class relief and a rider change. It is possible despite the morning line, that **#9 COLE SPUR** could wind up being favored and allow value on SISAWAY NOW. As far as COLE SPUR he has races and would be no surprise by any means, however is not the most consistent and requires a rebound effort to a top in order to win and does not hold much of an edge all things considered.

#5 NEW DICE is one of two for Litfin and could also show a move forward in his second start of the meet. Going back to 1/22, he was compromised by a SLOG and TROUBLE_S though showed run making a middle MOVE along the inside, something that is not clear to see looking at the running line alone. The rider change to Cabrera could also suggest positive intent as Cabrera had been aboard back in the 2021 racing season, where the efforts from NEW DICE in those events stack up on par/OFR.

#2 G T THREE FIFTY is tough to make a case for based on his current form and race to date with softer speed figures compared to others and for today's race par. With that said, he is a lightly raced four-year-old to suggest overall upside and as he lands here in the second start back off the layoff, this could be the time to see that new top effort.

Oaklawn Park Race 4

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This race starts with the assessment of **#5 PLAUSIBLE DENILE** as he comes into this race as the most experienced and with recency on his side. The 12/16 race was not the right spot to return given the route distance for a horse that prefers ONE_TURN. He projected to move up on 1/13 and did so as far as finishing position, though overall number remained similar and the effort on the PLODDY side. He could certainly just have the edge today and catch the right field as it seems he would require both to win. Baze is also back aboard and has been cold this meet as another factor that must be mentioned.

#1 ROYAL KING might be the "intended" of the Robertson runners for Oaklawn. He made his debut here last January and returned with a less than ideal ride (TACTIC- and WIDE) and trip on 1/13 noting both a rider and post position change for today's race. **#2 RUNAWAY JACK** was no match, however a clear second to his stablemate Boat Song back on 12/31 debuting here at Hawthorne Park. Boat Song made his first start back from that December race at this Oaklawn meet recording an 82 OptixFIG and show finish against $50k N2L claiming runners on 2/4.

As far as the group of first time starters many of which are well-bred sent out for top connections that are capable with debuting runners. With that said and the exception of sophomore **#7 TULSAN** (a vet scratch when they intended to debut last June at Churchill Downs) are older runners with clear setbacks to make their first start. Some intent for this meet could be in play for **#8 BOLZY** as they were working here last year and come into this race with a steady series of drills throughout January with a swift half-mile gate move on 1/15.

Oaklawn Park Race 5

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The class drop figures the right move for **#8 TAPIT'S SPIRIT** exiting the pair of allowance races this meet. Using a similar class angle **#7 EMERALD EXPRESS** projects to move up on the drop where he was more competitive at the claiming condition and recorded figures that stack up on par and sit right in line with TAPIT'S SPRIT and should be much higher of the two runners today.

#1 DEVIL'S TOWER ships in to make his second start off the layoff for Hartman and a return to Oaklawn Park, a course where he has recorded some of his higher figures and the 2022 season as a whole would make him competitive in today's group (and should find the right trip) and race par. Some value is required on **#9 LOST IN LIMBO**, an older horse coming back off the 233-day layoff for this event.

Oaklawn Park Race 6

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#8 EIGHT STRAIGHT seems logical as the morning live favorite. He has back numbers from his juvenile campaign to stack up on par and showed run despite the outside draw making a WIDE MOVE in the 1/8 layoff return.

Looking for a value alternative: **#3 PIER PRESSURE** moves up on the class DROP (OptixNOTE Projection) as he makes his third start of he meet. He debuted with an outside post and not much intent or support at 113-1 against Special Weight company. To his credit there some forward progression last month with the wide trip, though that 1/8 race still had a higher race par, an OFR similar to the Special Weight debut and finds a lower OFR this afternoon.

#5 LINE TO GAIN could also be sitting on a peak effort returning in this spot to make his second start back off the layoff and sticking with the maiden claiming condition. Going back to his Canterbury debut, he showed run in that place finish with a legit TROUBLE trip. Off that race he found the surface and distance changes at Hawthorne and with a WIDE trip improved his speed figure (OptixFIG that sits above today's 68-62 OFR) in that fourth place finish. The class and two week turnaround at Keeneland did him no favors and appeared overmatched with the public finding other ways to land as he went off at 124-1 in November.

Oaklawn Park Race 7

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 PRODIGIOUS BAY (Quad I Circle) wheels back in just 19-day from a very game front end effort to hold place off the layoff. Some regression could kick in all things considered though should take up a similar trip forwardly placed and his presence can make things tougher for some others looking to run with a similar trip.

The Mason runners could assist each other in this scenario. **#3 ICE BLAST** (Quad I Square) returns from the 135-day layoff as a contender on his best day and one that has tactical speed to keep Prodigious Bay honest up front. **#7 NOTARY** tends to make his run from off the pace (Quad IV Square) and does require pace to target. With that said, he could find himself suited to today's dynamic and even race closer to the pace with a rider change and making his second start off the layoff. That also includes the 1/22 "trip" noting a slow (SLOG) start that followed with TRAFFIC, TROUBLE still putting in a late CLOSE, a strong kick in that 6th finish.

Oaklawn Park Race 8

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This is a tougher event without a clear cut standout and a case to be made for every horse in this field, including the two Hawthorne Derby participants.

Keying off that race: **#1 CAMP DAVID** set the pace and set a Very Slow (VS O4/O6) pace before losing ground. While that alone does not give him an "excuse" front runners that lack finish (Circles) need to use their speed to try and separate, something Esquivel (TACTIC-) did not go though Saez was able to accomplish picking up the November Churchill win and something Castillo could look to do here.

#7 TONKA WARRIOR appears more "obvious" not only finishing second that day but also in terms of current form (lacking Red in OptixGRID) and posting consistent speed figures and in the money finishing positions. A similar effort can be expected though to win, Tonka Warrior must find a bit more as the string of B- OptixGRADES has him settling for another minor award without showing improvement today.

#1 B SUDD has shown consistent form this second with OptixFIG in OFR and pairing B- OptixGRADES in each allowance start. He is a lightly raced type that now has the route experience on his side, something he lacked heading into the 1/7 event.

Oaklawn Park Race 9

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The connections for **#3 I'M BETH DUTTON** picked this spot as she was re-entered to run here and scratched from a similar maiden event (2/5 6f $30k MCL) on Sunday. She had rougher trip on debut than it may appear on paper and the physical (TROUBLES+) nature of the race playing a potential role in the layoff that followed. She was entered to return in a $50k maiden claiming event here on 1/20, however unable to compete as a vet scratch that day. The issue is likely minor as they return to the entries fairly quick after the scratch.

#5 CANDY CARAMEL finds the class relief, a positive change she has been looking for. At this point she does not have much in terms of improvement available, though her races to date, even including the 1/14 race, stack up on par here. **#7 BIOGENIC BABE** must improve and as far as class this is a step up (higher OFR) on this circuit from her first two starts despite the change from Special Weight.

The class drop could move up **#10 UNSUNG MELODY** as she ships in for this second start. She debuted 20-days ago the Fair Grounds and did lack a lead change (NO_LEAD) and drifting (NO_LINE) something that could be of concern running today for a tag.