Handicapping Analysis
Sat February 11th, 2023

Stakes Spotlight

Golden Gate Fields Race 8

Post Time 6:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

A lot of attention expects to land on the Baffert pair in this stakes race with some question marks on that duo. There are some factors to consider on these individuals that might not appear as clear "on paper" especially with the projected shorter price given the connections. **#1 GILMORE** does not have the most efficient action and has not been seen in two months, since his maiden win at Los Alamitos. While there could have been some intent to run in the G2 San Vicente (trainer scratch) they picked this spot to return to instead. While Gilmore did win in his second start and around two turns, he did so with a favorable trip (TACTIC+) at a time the barn was live (HOT) and finished all out in a drive recording a declining number 81 OptixFIG from the 90 earned on debut - a pattern that can be a negative for this barn. As far as **#8 NULLARBOR** he also has a pattern of layoff lines, though will return here in a second start off the layoff. While he recorded a new top (90 OptixFIG) with his maiden win on 1/6 sprinting, though also appeared all out (HARD) for the live (HOT) barn and visually gave off some signs that could see a REGRESS.

#5 HARCYN is deserving of a look in this race as a progressive, developing type with local experience. He will make his route debut and will look to continue his progress and winning ways in today's stakes field. Going back to his debut win (B+ OptixGRADE) in October, he visually presented as a runner that could be a progressive type and handle more ground. Reading between the lines, some intent could be in play for this stakes race bring him back off the layoff on 1/16 looking for a solid returning effort (B+ OptixGRADE) and getting what they need for him to peak in this event.

#4 PASSARANDO has the edge of the group from the Gold Rush Stakes back in December. While he has that on his side and in his own right a very honest, willing race horse, he number wise he has yet to show much in terms of a step forward.

Tampa Bay Downs Race 10

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Handicapping can be a complex and intricate art, though sometimes it just happens to be neat and "clean" with a pair of runners that "scour" their way to the top.

#4 LAVER showed ability going back to his debut and the connections suggesting some confidence in his abilities running in a $500k stakes race as a maiden in just his second start. Since that time LAVER has made the transition to the dirt and shown progression in running and in terms of speed (improving OptixFIG) race-to-race. This will be his second start off the layoff and exiting the Mucho Macho Man stakes last month, a race he looked to need and off the visuals projects to benefit from that race to produce another move forward. Visually LAVER is preferred (upside potential) over the eventual winner of the Mucho Macho Man, **#10 DREAMING OF KONA**, promoted via DQ.

#6 CLASSIC CAR WASH keeps up the theme in both the pun and for progressive, improving type younger horses. Even though he will find a class test today, he is valid in this race and has passed each test where his visuals match the running lines. He has shown dominance (B+ OptixGRADES) over his rivals this season at Gulfstream Park to suggest he is ready for the class test and has versatility in terms of surface, running style and is proven around two turns.

#7 DUBYUHNELL projects to be favored today with the strong speed figure earned in the Remsen (G2) win back in December. While a repeat of that effort is tough to deny that makes him the horse to beat, that race has not shown the strength in the numbers for the horses that have run back. In addition, they will be returning today from another layoff and first start on this circuit in arguably a tougher all around class test.

#2 PRAIRIE HAWK and **#5 GROVELAND** return from the exacta finish in the January 13th allowance race; a blanket three horse finish (in a four horse field at the wire where a case can be made the show finisher, Classic Catch, might have been "best" on the day. GROVELAND deserves another mention as he did break outward in that race and has shown similar though not as extreme in his prior starts - that can be concerning to horses on his outside as far as them potentially taking contact at the break.

Leading off the pair of recent maiden winners: **#3 CLASSIC LEGACY** debuted back at Saratoga in a race that appeared at the time to have quality though perhaps has not been as strong as that early projection. As far as CLASSIC LEGACY, he has shown progression in his own right and the connections will ship in and see where he fits going forward as this will be a test in stakes company, first start against winners, around two turns and also giving up recency from the 70-days since his win. **#8 NOTAH** ran well to break his maiden though off the visuals, it is tougher to see a move forward and especially the progression he would require to compete in this race.

#2 LITIGATE could wagering support given the connections and "new face" that is lightly raced. While he has shown subtle speed figure improvement, his overall visuals leave something to be desired.

#1 WORTHINGTON has similar concerns for this level based on his visuals stepping up in class today while making his dirt debut. Both **#9 CHAMPIONS DREAM** and **#12 ZYDECEAUX** exit the Pasco, the "prep" for this race and while the two finished 1-2 the race appeared WEAK for the level and both runners will be tested for stamina making their two-turn debut.

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Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Park Race 1

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

As far as **#6 MAHAAMEL** as the projected race favorite, he fits logically in that role. He returns from a pair of place finishes earning B OptixGRADE at the level and should hold his form back in today's race.

#2 GREATHEART has back number here at Oaklawn Park right in line with Mahaamel keying off last season. He will be tested here on the class rise as he makes his first start off the claim for Hollendorfer.

#3 CARNIVORE is lighter on numbers though has recency and form on his side coming back today with a better draw than the outside on 1/8. **#1 JEDREK** is also light on numbers, however had shown progression prior to this season and this season has improved with each start.

Oaklawn Park Race 2

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

As far as the projected favorites: **#11 TWITTY CITY** will be stepping up off a win and in terms of trip could be tested in today's dynamic especially with the far outside draw. **#5 CALIFORNIA SWING** is a confirmed closer where trip and pace must be considered and can be a liability at a shorter number.

That opens up the race to alternatives: Diodoro will stretch out **#1 COOL RUNNINGS** in this event as makes his first start off the claim. Following the analysis on this site, Cool Runnings has had trip-after-trip this season and even his 1/29 race can be upgraded from the 5th place shown on paper making a competitive MOVE and B-OptixGRADE effort.

#4 PRINCIPE GUILHERME will find some subtle class relief to run in this spot and could be just what he needs holding recency and a favorable run style for today's race. **#3 RYE HUMOR** is tough to ignore at the morning line with races that stack up on par, sitting on a forward swing of an "every other" pattern and could appreciate the rider change from Talamo to a better gate rider. **#10 FIRST LINE** is another closer though fits on his best day with numbers from last season on par and can be upgraded from the 1/27 race (X_FLOW) showing run against the dynamic.

Oaklawn Park Race 3

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 DERBY CODE was claimed out of the 12/30 event and has been given time before returning here first off the claim for Sharp to race protected. The move suggests intent and as far as class, this could even turn out to be a softer spot noting a higher OFR last out. The front wraps were also added off the layoff in December and could see a removal today.

#7 COLOSI picked up a win at this level, pulling off the 20-1 upset back in December. He was able to benefit from the trip saving ground and in the two January races was not as fortunate with the setup. Trip will still be the test here and for Juarez to find that perfect run to get the win. **#8 GUARD** does not appear as obvious though has some buried form that gives him a mention as one that could get "lost" on the board.

#2 LITTLE DEMON is likely to find the opposite with public support finding its way in his direction. His recent form fits in this event to appear logical and finding some class relief out of Aqueduct as well as a running against (X_BIAS) the track from the rail on 1/20. It is worth following the Jacobson runners on this circuit as their make their Oaklawn debut appearances this season to upgrade and downgrade as necessary.

Oaklawn Park Race 4

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 DEAR LADY does not appear as strong as the favorite for this race without much of an edge in today's field. By contrast, **#2 DEMI** returns from the same 1/20 allowance race also recording a B- OptixGRADE, same as DEAR LADY, however DEMI posting a BTL effort making TWO_MOVES against the (X_FLOW) race shape. The effort does not appear an outlier as she caught the eye back in the Trapeze showing a sneaky good (WIDE, WIDE) willing run. She has shown improvement race-to-race and another honest effort is expected; with value as well.

#6 BOLT FOR ALLISON will land her in her first start against winners and that comes with a test in its own right. She has to her credit shown progress with each start and improving speed figures race-to-race. Her stablemate **#1 CONDENSATION** must improve overall and will also be tested for stamina as she makes a route debut. It is worth mentioning as she makes her second start of the meet, back on 1/13 she was in the race with her stablemate, Klassy Bridgette, the open length pacesetting, even money chalk winner. **#7 U GLOW GIRL** also returns from that 1/13 common race with similar challenges as she will be tested for stamina as well making her route, two turn debut.

Oaklawn Park Race 5

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This is a competitive event where a case can be made for many making it tougher to take the short number on **#11 ASPEN CLUB** while at the same time fitting as a logical type in this spot.

Looking to get creative: **#7 ONEIGHTHUNDREDCASH** might not have been "race ready" returning from the layoff on 1/21 based on the visuals that day and with that race under his belt with prior form could see him competitive here. **#3 LORD M** might look a little more "obvious" and likely to show early speed draw inside rival Aspen Club. Stablemate **#8 BOTANY** could also find the right trip though is cross entered on Friday.

#6 TALE OF TRUTH can be given an EX - EXCUSE after the break on 12/18. With that said, he has a long history of poor GATE (SLOG) issues that are self-inflicted and can be a liability especially as the connections alone are likely to take support.

Milligan has a pair in the field with **#10 SOBRIETY** coming back off the maiden win where he was well-meant off the layoff, despite flying under the radar of the public that day. He was also flattered by the race shape and those factors should be weighed with the projected odds. His stablemate **#13 DEPART** (AE) might have to wait for another day though should be followed as he has some buried, progressive form and projects to IMPROVE off his races this season.

Oaklawn Park Race 6

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The pace should be contentious (Fire - OptixPLOT) which is just one of a few knocks on both **#3 TRULY A ROCKET** and **#6 LEGENDARY GIFT** coming back at a shorter prices in this race off front running wins.

The contention could set up a trip for **#9 XYLOPHONE**, a runner that has yet to chase a fast early pace this season and will find class relief as she makes her third start this meet exiting higher OFR events. **#8 DUTCHESS BUBBLES** will be required to step up in class though has back numbers and form here at Oaklawn Park, that form that flew under the public radar and set her up for the win last month. **#4 HOPING FOR A RING** also has some back numbers from the 2022 season that makes her a fit. Price compensation is required based on her current form and the numbers in the prior season were recorded for a different barn. With that said, Arrieta taking over today could be a live sign picking up a top rider as she drops back to the claiming level to suggest positive intent.

Oaklawn Park Race 7

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Going back to January 21st when **#2 BACKGROUND** was making his return off the layoff it was noted in the Emily's Analysis on this site, that he is typically a "second off" horse when turning in a peak effort. As he returns from off an honest race three weeks ago and one to add some fitness a move forward can be projected as well as that noted intent.

The two Asmussen runners, make second in this race and fit on their best day. The conditions allow **#8 SUPER STOCK**, a graded stakes/stakes winner to participate here and race protected. He has some challenges as this will be his first start back in 252-days and has in the past required a race moving forward in a "second off" cycle. **#9 SILVER PROSPECTOR** returns to make his "second off" exiting the 5th Season stakes. He had the layoff as well as the far outside post as adversity and the rider (TACTIC-) was unable to overcome the draw with the WIDE trip throughout. He has numbers that stack up on par though must work a trip from a similar draw with potential intent given the rider change back to Santana.

#6 SOY TAPATIO had to work hard to get the stakes win back in November at Zia Park and some concern that he would require extra recovery time from that effort. That could suggest he needed the race off the layoff and played a role in the 5th Season stakes effort, though all around needed to see more from him and must rebound today.

#5 THOMAS SHELBY must be mentioned listed as the morning line favorite. While he has races that make him a fit, he tends to do his better running when on the lead and can often falter, even at times without excuse. Those factors must be considered with a shorter price and given other alternatives in the field.

Oaklawn Park Race 8

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#10 KNOCKER DOWN will look to redeem himself coming up just short as the favorite on 1/6. As far as his effort he recorded a solid 95 OptixFIG second best in a DUEL with the winner, Golden Hornet.

#8 MISTER MMMMM also recorded a 95 OptixFIG on the same day and in a similar conditioned allowance race, though a slighter softer OFR of the two allowance sprints that day. **#12 CLASSIC MOMENT** also returning from the Race 6 on 1/6, will also look for some redemption going off as the second choice in the wagering and finishing off the board without a strong excuse. A case could be made that he required the start returning from the two month break and also as far as appearance was WARM that day, something not characteristic from this horse in the past.

#4 HOYA PARANOYA should be flying under the radar wheeling back from the pouring rain (WEATHER) race just two weeks ago. He had an EX - EXCUSE, albeit self-inflicted, missing the break (VSLOG) though made a massive BTL MOVE that deserves a follow.

Oaklawn Park Race 9

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 PARODY could find the right field, trip and with buried form cycle back to a top effort to compete in this race. Following her debut win, she shipped out to Baffert in California to run in a pair of stakes races. In each start, she was send to the lead and into Fast/Very Fast early paces upgrading her from the dynamic and also in terms of running style as she does not appear as a confirmed "pacesetting" type.

#3 KEY OF LIFE fits logically with OptixFIG in OFR and with form at similar type sprint stakes events. She does project to find pace pressure with her running style and will also give up some recency returning from the 77-day layoff.

The layoff is not nearly as long as it is for **#4 STONE SILENT** returning from a 238-day layoff to run in this event and pick this particular spot for Sadler. The placement could suggest intent running on this circuit in just her second start with allowance eligibility still in play. While this will be the first Sadler runner here at Oaklawn this season, the barn has shipped in live runners in the past.

The class test and trip will be a test for both **#3 KLASSY BRIDGETTE** and **#7 TWIRLED** both runners stepping up in class coming off favorable scenarios winning as the favorite, respectively.

Oaklawn Park Race 10

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Of the four runners in this field with experience they have all left something to be desired when looking for a contender. **#7 INTO LOVE** leads off that group and could get attention off the pair of place finishes this season. In both races she was able to establish a LONE lead up front and still lacked, NO_FINISH, when needed late. That opens the race to a new face and to look at the first time starters.

#2 PUNCHBOWL seems well intended for this meet given the local works and progressive series of drills here at Oaklawn Park. The connections are more than capable with first time starters, coming at no surprise to the public.

Positive intent could also be in play for **#5 ALLYMISSLOVE** as she makes her debut here for Brisset with owner WinStar sending out other runners on the card.

#9 MONTASTICAL is a tough read as she worked 10.1 back in April at the sale while still green recording that time on her left lead. She might have required additional time to develop and work playing a role in the timing of this debut noting a series of works from last spring into the first part of the summer. She started working in the first part of January as far as published moves with more foundation on the farm prior to returning to the work tab at Louisiana Downs.