Handicapping Analysis
Thu March 9th, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Assessing the favorite, **#1 IT'S GREEK TO ME** there could be some "knocks" as far as the recent layoff lines, though comparing her form at today's N2 claiming level to the others in the field, her form stands out over those others. That goes back to last season with the two Hawthorne starts from 11/18 and 12/4 recorded B-OptixGRADES and OptixFIG of 76-77, figures that stack up on the higher side of today's 77-69 OFR. By contrast **#2 SWEET FRAULINE** ran in both of those events recording slightly lower OFig (shown on Past 3 Runlines alongside the FREE OptixPLOT HAW data) and C+ OptixGRADES.

#6 MUD HUT joined that pair back on 12/4 coming back from the 176-day layoff and that return race assisted her off the bench and when moving forward in her next start on 12/18 and could see that same pattern moving forward into the meet. **#3 FROST WARRIOR** also appears another that could use that same pattern getting a start under her belt. Klopp, a top trainer at HS Indy shows up with **#4 OCEAN HONEY** to make her local debut and the sophomore is lighter on numbers. Six-year-old mare **#5 CESSO** has a different challenge coming back today off the 313-day layoff while also taking on open company here.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 2:57 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Following the familiar strategy of "assessing the favorite" **#1 NIFF** could win this but... there are some questions as she returns from the 272-day layoff with gaps in the works returning off the layoff and showing up with the class drop. In addition she was entered last month (2/16) at Turfway Park for the $15k claiming tag ($28k purse) and was listed trainer scratch. Her early speed perhaps poses the biggest threat in today's race shape, shorter distance and compact field, at the same time she has come up short at a shorter price in the past.

#2 SMILE AT THE STORM caught a full field closing day (12/31) in the finale. She showed some brief speed before fading in that group and should note the winner, Manhattan Legacy came from a mid-pack stalking trip to win. It was tough to read the intention for Smile at the Storm that day dropping in class, making her first start for Quinonez though did take some wagering support given her assigned 30-1 morning line in that race. She has some back numbers that stack right up with this group and perhaps with more time in the Quinonez barn is ready to return to that form.

#4 FIELD DAISEY also returning from that 12/31 event had her work cut out for her draw well outside and showed up with a solid effort (another from just off the pace) though with a WIDE trip gaining ground for place.

#6 IRISH HALO arguably turned in her best effort of the 2022 Hawthorne fall/winter meet in the first part of the season with a strong effort and tough beat in the BLANKET finish on September 24th. She struggled to find her form the rest of the season though perhaps has that same "race ready" run coming back fresh for Perez.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:24 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The good **#1 SILVER MOON ROAD** from last year will take some effort to get beat today. While he will be required to run fresh, the time off might have been required and is encouraging that he remains protected in this starter allowance condition. His early speed is dangerous and requires the others to press or try and run him down. With that said, he projects to be a very short price in this field as one that appears very, very obvious.

#2 TRY TRY AGAIN will run to his namesake in this spot; and while he might not be on the level of the "best" Silver Moon Road, he does bring local Hawthorne experience of the two. Try Try Again appears to hold a fondness for this racing surface with some of his more competitive races and higher figures over this Cicero dirt main track. He is going to need more than a top effort, he will need some racing luck and help from the others in this field to contest the pace and hope to get the trip.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:51 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 FEVER NATION looks legit in this spot and as the favorite. His debut (SLOG closing ground into pacesetting chalk winner) was his only race running against statebred Special Weight company. He turned in an honest account of himself in both statebred stakes race as well as the 12/30 Special Weight race against open company and clear place behind his stablemate winner, Sivako.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Olaf Hernandez coming off a solid opening day of riding could be the key to get the right trip and handling for **#1 SUPERSTAR DIVA**. She has some tactical speed (quad I Square at the ParLine) that could allow her to track/pressure **#3 FOGGY KITTEN** and **#8 FIRST SQUADRON** (even **#2 SINGING ALLI** if she shows speed today).

#6 FRIEND is looking for that right stalking trip and for those to the lead to take something out of each other in order to pick them up in the lane. From further back **#4 WANNA HAVE FUN** might need the race more ground and even more pace though clear she has a strong late kick (though also a habit of breaking slow/SLOG) and can IMPROVE off the 9th place run that "closed" out her 2022 season.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 4:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Both **#5 ONASA** and **#7 WAR ROOM** have early speed and with today's shorter distance likely to engage early. Both runners will exit races at the Fair Grounds where War Room ran in the rain (WEATHER) back on 2/11 and as part of the early pace that day is given a "flow upgrade" with the race slowing late and the top four finishing together at the wire. As far as Onasa, the form from the other runners exiting the 1/21 race has held up and holding his form fits with today's group.

#8 FITZEA is the "wild card" he will make his local debut and first start of the season with grow potential coming back from the 166-day layoff. His work appear steady and the timing seems key to have him ready to race early in the meet. Centeno, is another rider that came ready to ride with a strong showing on opening day and has the call here.

#6 VINTAGE VINYL is an older horse and maiden coming back off the layoff. He tends to be one that "what you see is what you get" as he does not appear to have much upside at this point or move forward potential from Amoss even with the barn change.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:12 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The rail draw, early speed, 5f distance and today's race complexion could be the edge for **#1 CINDY'S G MAN** on the lead to take control start to finish. As shown on the OptixPLOT he has the controlling speed to the first call (furthest left) and to the second call (y-axis/above ParLine) though not the strongest finishing ability (Circle) suggesting he will need to use his speed to clear and get some separation early to hold late.

#6 EAST OF INDIA has been running closer to the lead in his two recent Turfway races and those efforts could set him up for this race. He has the ability to show early speed though better in a stalking role with a "target" and has that here.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 5:39 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Trainer Brian Cook has two of the confirmed pacesetters in this race with **#6 LOOKING SALTY** and **#7 WICKED SURPRISE** in this race. Both have similar form at this level and exiting the closing day (12/31) maiden claiming race where the top three finishers ran on from off-the-pace.

In terms of class the change is in play **#8 SOVIET STANDARD** in terms of purse, though does step up to a higher race par running in against older. The opposite for **#1 ANUNKA** as he finds a lower OFR for his return and slight change in purse/claiming tag.

The change in class is also in play for **#4 DERRICKS MEDALLION** shipping in from Gulfstream Park. While he will be out to still prove who and how much run he has, it must be noted the 2/8 race has been productive with improving figures for the runners next out including one next out winner and another that finished second with a "winning" type place finish and the other to finish third, respectively.

Oaklawn Park Race 1

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 LEVY projects to be the more fancied part of the entry given the class drop along with the current form and figures. The all around changes should move them up in this field while they are unlikely to move up at this point in their race career just need to find the right spot.

#2 FIVE O FOX returns to a route distance for the first time since their December debut. That race was a higher class level and tougher all around running at the higher $50k maiden condition and should carry some fitness from the recent sprints into this stretch out. **#6 LOBO IRISH** has not had the luck of the draw starting out 2023 and suffering ground loss (WIDE/X_WIDE) in both race though at the same time still showing interest.

Oaklawn Park Race 2

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

As far as **#1 LIARS CLUB** he is capable though has been stuck at the N2 condition for quite some time and has lacked any real strong excuse keeping him from the win. **#8 MAJOR CONTENDER** could turn into that for this race and off his form finding class relief, albeit subtle, from the Turfway races and back to the Oaklawn main track where he broke his maiden last year. **#6 HAPPY BOY ROCKET** will be tested for stamina back around two turns, though this distance does appear the plan by Asmussen noting an entry back on 2/26 at 8.5f though a stewards scratch that day and without much hesitation is back in the entries and in this event.

Oaklawn Park Race 3

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 KING DOODLE looked to require the short distance following his races closing out 2022 in Kentucky. While he did find that change this year at Oaklawn, he has had some subtle trips and needs an aggressive ride and forwardly placed run and perhaps a clean break (something he did not have on 2/17) with the shift off the rail will be the key.

#7 DANCIN ROCKET returns to face open company and the same conditions/par from 2/4. There was a longer than normal delay as one had to return to the paddock and the horses were held up at the gate for around 10mins and especially noted in this case with DANCIN ROCKET given a pre-race WARM_UP. **#8 NATORADE** showed a sneaky CLOSE on 2/20 and could build off that debut and a better draw in a less full field.

Oaklawn Park Race 4

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This is a competitive race with a case to be made for many in this field. **#3 VIOLENT GIGI** has some buried early speed and that could be key for his trip in today's race shape. He will face many in this field returning from the common race back on 2/20. As far as race result, **#5 CHAPEL BARN** could appear the most "obvious" with the place finish, though is one that has shown an "every other" pattern with the upswing for last months event. Show finishing **#4 SIDETOWN** was doing enough to hold position and likely to face more early pace pressure here. That could open the door for **#2 FREUDIAN FATE** to step up in the second start off the layoff and from the WIDE trip last month. He requires a top effort though has races to date that fit on par. Similar can be said for **#7 MYSTERY MAN** one that is, in addition, moving forward with each race in his third start of the form cycle.

Oaklawn Park Race 5

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Tough to hold the Dogwood (G3) against **#5 GUNNING** as that race was followed up by the layoff she will return from today. Her form prior makes her a main contender and this spot using her conditions of eligibility to regain some confidence heading into the 2023 racing year.

#7 AZUL TEQUILA will also show up off a similar trip back on December 29th at Turfway Park where she broke slow (SLOG) showed run making a middle MOVE and willing through TRAFFIC to finish in a blanket for the minors behind the open length chalk winner, Quaria Comet.

#4 HYPERSPORT fits as a logical type for this race with form at the allowance level this season and consistent figures that fit on par and with the others in this group. She is projected to fall into that heavy favorite role, with the short price as the primary knock.

Oaklawn Park Race 6

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This is another competitive event with many ways to land. A couple runners that could present upside while also get overlooked off their running lines and finishing positions: **#7 HONEYCAMP** will make her second start of the cycle and first in for the maiden claiming tag. She raced wide on debut and made a RUSH into the Fast early pace in the recent 2/18 start. The connections looked to have **#6 ELMO'S SECRET** pointed to this meet and giving her a start back in November at Remington Park. She was entered twice in December before the January 14th race and while it is tough to see "on paper" she did made a brief RUSH into a Very Fast early pace before losing ground. She has been given time since and returns with a rider change. **#2 BROOKE'S ALL IN** turned in a BTL debut and had to deal with KICKBACK after a SLOG on 2/18. She is another in this field that will shift to the maiden claiming level for the first time from Special Weight company. The TROUBLE+ was a little more "obvious" for **#11 RELENTLESS ROCKET** and likely to see that reflected in the odds.

Oaklawn Park Race 7

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Lukas is not afraid to run horses and take shots and noted as he returns with **#8 GAME KEEPER**, a maiden in this allowance event. As far as GAME KEEPER this will be just his second start and had a subtle trip in the debut just 12-days ago. As far as this individual he carried himself well training last year at Saratoga and presented as one that is suited to a route distance.

#2 HEROIC MOVE will also make a second start though under a solid ride/TACTIC+ and effort was able to secure the win first out. They wheel back for this race in just 19-days and that timing could suggest the horse came out of the race well and is still holding his form.

#1 MENDELSSOHNS MARCH was promoted to the win in his debut on 2/2 at the Fair Grounds, though his effort was game all around and the top two were in a tight photo for the win. He will be tested on this circuit and with today's surface switch. McPeek will also return with **#6 B MINOR** and shifting back to the dirt, the surface of his maiden win. This will be his first start of the season and coming back as a sophomore, time he would require to develop and improve as necessary with his races last year "lighter" than others in this field.

#3 SILVER HEIST will also ship in from the Fair Grounds exiting the Risen Star (G2) stakes. The connections might be looking for where he belongs as it was a tough read in the first two starts finishing both races in a BLANKET finish.

Oaklawn Park Race 8

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 KAVOD could have a pace advantage and might need to take it. Without an aggressive ride from Cabrera **#1 FULL AUTHORITY**, **#4 ONE FOR RICHIE** and **#6 SEVEN NATION ARMY** could move up to press and KAVOD appears to need the ideal trip to win.

#3 PAYNE also needs the right trip and pace to close into, something he had in his favor back on 1/28. **#5 HEART RHYTHM** will exit stakes company and could assist this one as he has held his form and figures. It should be noted he was entered in an allowance here on 2/17 though unable to race as a vet scratch that day.

Oaklawn Park Race 9

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Number wise **#4 ETERNALLY GRATEFUL** has consistently recorded some of the higher figures in this field and competitive races at a similar level sprinting this season. That combination could see him catch the right group on the day, though with the expected short price his tendency to break slow/SLOG and run from off the pace should be considered along with the price. **#1 CHARLIE WHISKEY** also appears to find support and the class drop could be what he needs but this move is pretty severe for just a second start where it appears the connections are just ready to move on. Similar attention could land on **#11 GONE AGAIN** given a subtle trip last out and with the cutback here for Becker though noted a step up in class all around.

#2 WELLWRIT will wheel right back for this second start with some changes from the debut just 19-days ago. In that debut he ran against Special Weight company at a mile with obvious drop and cut back. Wellwrit did briefly show some early foot on a faster early pace for the distance and that could be what they expect again with the blinkers on. A rider change is also in play with G. Saez taking over as Bowen was up for the debut and also had been aboard **#3 TAP THAT DIAL** on 2/24, though will stick with **#9 DOUBLE STRIKE** today.

#9 DOUBLE STRIKE looked to move up back at the maiden claiming level on 1/22. Things did not go as planned as he had early TROUBLE forced out WIDE on the first turn and might have required the time off since to recover from that contact and still presents a move forward.