Handicapping Analysis
Thu March 16th, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

As far as **#7 AWESOME WILLY** as the projected favorite, he fits logically in this race though might not hold as many advantages over others in this field to justify a price that could be shorter than actual odds. His ability to show early speed might be the most advantageous and required as a speed figure or class edge is less present.

Number wise both **#1 I'M YOUR VALENTINE** and **#8 GUS GUS** stack right up with **#7 AWESOME WILLY** on on their best day have run higher figures on the main track/synth - the main track surface at Turfway Park. **I'M YOUR VALENTINE** returns to Hawthorne where his form from the end of the 2022 season was competitive at a slightly higher condition than today's $7.5k event.

The class change to maiden claiming looked to benefit **#5 GRAND FESTIVAL** back on November 19th, though did not have a chance to show it taking a legit stumble (TROUBLE_S) creating an EX - EXCUSE and will return off the layoff for the first start back since that race.

In terms of gate (SLOG) issues, that pattern for **#3 ELECTRIC CHARGE** in his two sprints is noted as well as the race shapes as he was in some way able to benefit from the race flow moving up late. Overall he is a lightly raced progressive type where another forward move can be projected though does give up the edge there to others coming back off the 75-day break and into a route debut.

#2 UNCLE DICK does not hold a class edge over others as he returns here though did show some run and comes back to this circuit with buried form off the running lines and finishing positions as shown on the OptixNOTES/PLOT - those OptixEQ Past Performances FREE for the entire Hawthorne meet can be found here -- - https://hawthorneracecourse.com/event/optixeq-plots/2023-03-16/

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 2:57 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 MRS. NUSHI is a tough favorite to get excited about for this race though does fit at this level. She has the tendency to break slow (SLOG) and run from off the pace as a result, her edge on class and speed figures could see her closer to the pace on those advantages against the others in this field.

#3 SEQUAYA has run some of the higher figures of any in this field though it takes going back in her form top find those races. She does also have some recent form that would make her competitive in this group and could present some upside here. She ran three races here last season with two of those at a route of ground and one where she was racing above condition (N3) back on December 4th. She showed speed wheeling back for the December 18th sprint, a race that had a Very Fast (VF O4S) race shape and has been off since. The argument her better days are behind her is valid, though the price compensation should be there to find out and the barn with Brian Cook, typically lower percentage win connections have started out with some success during the first week and similar for the returning apprentice rider, Giles after missing the 2022 season.

#2 HEY MA is at her best when handled assertively and that has not been the case as of late from rider TACTIC- to race shapes and front running winners back on October 23rd and December 9th. **#9 BELLS OF JOY** requires a similar hand especially at this 5f distance with the outside post coming off the layoff. With that said, she has back numbers right in line with Mrs. Nushi and buried form (C+/B- OptixGRADE) that is more competitive than the recent run lines and finishing positions may suggest.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:24 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The OptixPLOT for this race is signaling a Contentious pace (Sun) with a higher 86 SpeedRate - that is also shown visually with the majority of the field positioned above the ParLine. That scenario moves up the "lone closer" **#4 ROCKET HOTSHOT** as a Large Square (late kick) from Quad IV. There are plenty of reasons "against" this horse in this spot where cases can be made for others though the pace scenario with the expected morning line odds provide balance. https://hawthorneracecourse.com/event/optixeq-plots/2023-03-16/

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:51 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Looking at the Plot with the Quad I Contention and SpeedRate along with the Extended Note on **#4 GIANT CRITIC** that states he finished "all out" just two weeks ago, he could be up against it (weaker favorite) at a shorter price in this race as projected. GIANT CRITIC with tactical speed could be asked to keep pace with **#3 HE TAKES CHARGE**, **#5 MOMENT**, **#7 ASTI SKY** and **#9 TWO WORLDS**, three of those runners as the secondary choices on the morning line.

Trip wise **#2 DIAMOND DAVE** should be sitting in an ideal trip to "stalk and pounce" on that Quad I (first flight) of runners tracking as a Square (finishing ability) right off those runners. His form from last year fits on par and at this level with perhaps one of his biggest hurdles here coming back off the 118-day layoff to a top effort for this now eight-year-old gelding. **#6 DYNABLUE** could also sit a similar trip based on Plot position. His Plot shape and position is related to some trips and race dynamics on the main track closing out 2022 and does seem to prefer the TURF though on his "best" day is right in the mix with the others in this field when it comes down to assessing the board. **#1 PISTOL BOX** should have some pace to run at and a top effort coming off the layoff, though a late run from him can be expected with the race shape combined with a Large Square from Quad IV.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#9 PACHI makes a lot of sense in this spot. His form, consistency from last year fit on par and that includes his seasonal return here off a 112-day layoff last April to finish second with an 81 OptixFIG. **#11 IRISH TUFF** has the layoff, shorter distance and post position against him, though factors that could see him dismissed by the public for this race. His form fits right in line with PACHI and perhaps even upgraded further running at slightly higher N4 claiming races closing out 2022. The draw and race shape could present a hurdle for **#12 SHANGHAI POINT** (and #13 W W TRAFALGAR) to at the least consider with odds come post time.

When **#3 WINGING WAYS** ran at this level (October 2nd) last year he was the heavy 7-5 favorite and at a time where he was "weaker" in that role coming off a stronger effort (76 OptixFIG) just 9-days earlier. The race shape today (Quad I) combined with the massive shift in odds coming back for Quinonez keeps Winging Ways on the radar here.

#6 JETTIN OUT has some buried, solid form here at Hawthorne that is upgraded beyond his results shown "on paper" with speed figures and races run at a higher class level than today. He will make his first start on this circuit since 2021 and coming back off the 104-day layoff there are some reservations that must be noted as he was a vet scratch both on 2/12 at LRL and again on 3/3 at PEN. **#8 OVERBEARING** also has a pair of scratches (Reason Unavailable) since his win back on February 9th at MVR where he was dominant over the competition and looks to face a tougher group and larger field here as well.

#7 Z U SOON also has a "logical" look though going back to March 5th he was upgraded with a positive form cycle pattern and at odds; those odds he projects to be shorter today than on opening day - 11 days ago.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 4:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 SONG OF AMERICA turned in a sneaky good effort at this level, course and distance back on October 14th. While that race has not been "key" in the sense of next out winners, the form of that race has held up and has been productive with improvement from those runners. SONG OF AMERICA can be upgraded further from that October event as PRESSED on a Very Fast (VF 04S) early pace, which assisted the race flow for the top three finishers. **#3 COWGIRL FRANKIE** recorded higher figures in the Special Weight races here last year, though makes her run from off the pace (Quad IV) and has that challenge in terms of trip with the short distance to factor with odds.

As far as first time starters, they have the opportunity to jump up and compete in this spot as new faces. The inside runners, **#1 MANDREL** and **#2 CREME DE CASSIS** appear the most prepared and intended for this race along with the advantages from the inside posts and assertive riders on their side. **#6 LUNARCHY** should get attention off the connections, though in terms of preparation coming into this race with a gap in the works. **#11 RIVER'S DREAMS** also has some gaps in her works and gaps overall noting she makes her debut here as a five-year-old mare.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:12 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#7 MEDAL OF FACT can run a big race off the bench as well as a competitive race at this level, surface and distance. He has enough early speed (E RunStyle) to run on the lead, though also could fall into a trip (OptixPLOT) tracking right off **#5 FENESTRA** and **#9 LATIN CASINO**. **#8 TILTED TOWERS** could also be in that first flight (Quad I Standard), though the surface today running on the main track, is still a surface he is unproven (Surface/Distance Triangle) over and his two dirt races were recorded speed figures below today's OFR and below his numbers on the turf/synth - something to note in terms of value.

Watkins has sent out some well-intended and performing runners to start the meet and could hold similar intention for **#3 ALPINE GHOST** returning to Hawthorne in his second start off the layoff. His return race on February 17th at Turfway Park was a STRONG rated race for the level, with the show finisher, Tiz Our Turn coming back on March 3rd at Oaklawn to improve (OptixFIG) his number 11-points, from 79 to 90. That carries to **#1 THAT KHENNY** for Genaro Garcia also shipping in from that common race at Turfway last month and also back to Hawthorne and this circuit where they have prior local form on this circuit.

The shorter distance could be a hurdle for **#6 FIRST MASAMUNE** though numbers and class fit on OFR shown in the Past 3 Runlines. That also carries to **#4 STALLONE** one that needs all the assistance available looking to return to the winners circle for the first time since March 2021.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 5:39 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 MIDNIGHT ESCAPE is listed as the lukewarm morning line favorite for this race. He debuted here finishing second in a BLANKET finish at the wire and did not step forward as much while remaining consistent (pairing 83 OptixFIG) at Turfway Park. His maiden win was by open lengths on February 23rd though the WEATHER conditions should be noted especially in the case of the race track with tons of standing water -- and the speed figure/race result.

#3 PUTTHEPASTBEHIND recorded some strong efforts (BTL on debut) and place finish in the Tremont as a juvenile and before the layoff return in January. He has yet to run back to those numbers from last year though could be on a progressive pattern and looking for the right group where those things could come together at the same time.

#9 FORREST CITY ships in for Klopp and will land here in his second start against winners. He was tested on February 3rd coming off a maiden claiming win and stepped up to N1X allowance company and racing for $72k purse. That Turfway allowance has held form including two next out winners. This race par is slightly softer though there does appear intent to take this spot where they can race protected once again and that change is noted following a Trainer Scratch from a $30k N2L race on 2/24 at Turfway.

Number wise professional race horse, **#11 COMISKY PARK** fits with this group. He has a level of consistency that is tough to ignore though could be to a fault as he is still looking to clear this N1 allowance condition, a level he has been running at since May of 2022 with this being his 12th attempt at the win.

Hawthorne Race 9

Post Time 6:06 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 WEEKEND PASS is not without a chance in the finale. She gives up some recency off the 75-day layoff and still requires the right race shape (Quad IV Square) to set up her late run. As far as the race shape, there is a scenario she has pace to target with the "Sun" Contention and higher 67 SpeedRate. Her form is sneaky keying off a pair of races at this restricted $5k claiming level last year, which includes a B OptixGRADE and BTL effort on December 11th and TACTIC- compromised show finish with a B- OptixGRADE back on November 25th.

#10 KITTEN ROCKS will return to a route/two-turn race for the first time in a long time and could be the right change here. She has the ability to drop back and made a run, a style she has shown at this distance in the past and while under the handling of Baird, the returning rider today.

#6 PRANCIPANTS has not been given a break since the end of the 2022 Hawthorne meet. She ran a pair of competitive races here for Sanchez and one being a place finish (B- OptixGRADE/72 OptixFIG) at this level, surface and distance back on December 18th. **#9 WATCHIN THE WHEELS** finished a C+ OptixGRADE show finish though did have to deal with KICKBACK drawn at the rail that day and should avoid that here outside horses and to show similar tactical speed.

#7 AUNT STELLA is still moderately unproven at the surface/distance with most of her career sprinting. She did race here at a route back on December 4th staying on well (X_FLOW) all things considered in the 4th place result. Her presence (Quad I Square) in this race could make things tougher on others (**#2 COUGER** and **#3 FANCY EMPRESS** included) and a contributing factor to that Contention/SpeedRate noted.