Handicapping Analysis
Sun April 23rd, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 WILDWOOD'S WARRIOR returns to make his second start of the season and with Becker dropping in class for this race. The class change along with form moves them up in this spot. As far as the races at Oaklawn Park he was overmatched against those runners and can be given an upgrade from April 6th with the issues at the GATE and on a WIDE DUEL for that show finish.

#1 WHERE'S LUCKY is moving forward in his form cycle for the connections and off the races this season. He should be sitting on his peak effort just requires a trip with Felix back aboard to assist as well as projected honest pace with #3 GOLDEN CHELLA and #7 OPTION looking to keep the early pace honest. #5 CAPTAIN CARNEGIE is tougher to trust on the win end as he has come up short at this level and below as far as OptixGRADES (GRADES similar to #4 RIP IT RYAN underneath type) though carries some buried form to outrun his odds today, even if its for a minor share.

#6 IMPULSIVENESS fits on figures though must translate those numbers to the dirt, a surface he is unproven over and softer in the role as a shorter priced runner in this field.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 2:57 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 D'FEVER was forced to show a different dimension from his typical front running ways following the slow start (SLOG) on March 19th to CLOSE from off the pace. His B- OptixGRADE effort and 75 OptixFIG gives him a look back today under similar conditions. Further upside could be in play with the rider change to Mojica and for DiZeo, a barn that has started off a little cold though looking to turn things around any day now.

The rider change to Lezcano aboard **#3 EASTER MUSIC** could also suggest intent and improvement from April 9th when they appeared well-intended though unable to overcome the SLOG and track profile. Easter Music fits at this level show up with a win under similar conditions here last season, September 24th.

#6 D'YANK returns in this spot and off a weaker effort back on March 5th and looking to get back on track and form. They will race on Lasix this afternoon and also take a class drop to the lowest level of their career. While those changes off a "poor" effort can come with some concerns though that is offset with Felix remaining aboard today for Martinez. **#1 RESTORING HOPE** wheeling back from an improved effort on April 9th will require a trip form the inside, though could be a positive sign making that move forward in his current form and back numbers make him a contender – value is still key.

#7 JUST BLAZE will look to keep up the live streak of Fair Grounds shippers going for Scherer. In terms of numbers, they fit on this level and with progressive form from those return races this year despite the runlines and finishing positions. The connections were likely looking to run back on the turf, though had to alter plans and that should also be noted with the "efforts" on the main track.

The pace scenario could be tougher for ten-year-old #8 IRISH MAJOR, one that closed nearly pulling off the March30th upset. Pace on the opposite end could benefit #9 RISKY BOY with more tactical speed though still requires that aggressive ride from the outside and a top effort (with racing luck) to win.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:24 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This is a competitive race with many in here capable on their best day. **#1 LAST MARTINI** could move up in terms of trip and pace and even intent for Rosin returning off the layoff. They will race in this spot protected and with a steady series of works with Emigh named. They have been able to show tactical speed in the past and that type of run style (Quad I Square) could be the key to this race.

Recency could be the edge and the separator for the horses that have races here this season. **#5 PINEDALE** projects to IMPROVE in their second start of the season and from the trip on March 30th with the TROUBLE_S late MOVE together with their rival for show and continued to GALLOP+ after the wire. With that said, price compensation is still necessary on this runner coming from off the pace especially if the track/wind profile is similar to Thursday.

#4 SCAT SHACK returns from what could be assessed as an excuse on April 6th as they were restless in the GATE and unprepared at the start as a result. Overall, they require a top effort though have back form over this course, distance and tactical speed that has them competitive on their best day.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:51 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 KHOZAN'S SUCCESS will give up some recency returning here off the 236-day layoff. With that said, they look well placed at this level and race shape where they could be the controlling speed with OptixFIG in OFR for this level. Number wise #4 CADET CORPS has similar numbers, though those figures on the synth/turf and unproven whether those figures transfer to the main track.

Surface also looks to be the separator between **#6 FIRST MASAMUNE** given the edge on the dirt of #5 DYNABLUE (turf preferred), both horse with the edge on recency and local form.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This race would be different on the turf, the surface intended for many in this field and ones to follow with grass racing right around the corner. **#4 TAR HEEL GIRL** being one of those that will make the surface switch. She also makes the circuit switch exiting the GP meet and showing run and progress in her first two starts.

The April 6th race is a common race for statebred **#1 JOYZELLA** looking to bring that local experience as an edge where she returns today to again face open company; **#2 CLIMB TO GLORY** had a look that day though struggled with the trip/TACTIC- and from the rail. She was given a follow showing some run in spots and exiting productive races at Turfway Park – another that could be given a look on TURF.

#7 SECRET OPERATION could be under the radar in this race with intention of the Slager pair with the added ground. The route distance was the plan for her when entered on March 12th though unable to race that day as a vet scratch and to her credit improved off the debut on March 26th.

IL-bred stablemate #6 LIL CARRIE D has similar challenges to JOYZELLA (and #5 WICKED SKY) racing against open company. #3 HOP AWAY HOTTIE could project upside from her debut and WIDE trip returning for this second start and with the experience and distance change though so far the 3/16 race has not been a productive event.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 4:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The pace scenario creates a puzzle for this race and something to consider for #9 LONG TALL WOMAN coming back in this spot looking to keep up winning ways. She is capable though was a vet scratch on March 26th and has benefit from some favorable trips to consider. Her stablemate #5 IGGY BIGS will give up recency off the 126-day layoff and ultimately might require a race (and intended for turf) though on her best day sits with numbers right in line with LONG TALL WOMAN.

With Long Tall Woman a scratch on March 26th, #8 GOOD MONGOLIA took advantage with a PERFECT trip in her own right picking up the win and could look for similar here with tactical speed especially if allowed to race on the lead uncontested.

#6 AVASARLA and **#7 SEAWARD** have buried form at this level and are showing improvement coming into this event from their races this season.

#3 RACEDAY ATTIRE fits on class and figures especially off the allowance win three weeks ago. She recorded a top effort that day and could be some concern with a regression off that race.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:12 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 TRY TRY AGAIN does just that looking for the win and with progressive form this season should be in the right spot. They looked a little short coming off the layoff on March 9th and stepped up with a sneaky good B-OptixGRADE/BTL effort on March 30th with TROUBLE making a CLOSE together for place behind pacesetting winner and today's rival #3 DARK HEDGES.

#5 ALPINE GHOST also returns from a BTL effort at this level back on April 2nd with the poor WEATHER conditions and showing run in a less than ideal trip as show in the Past 3 Runlines.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 5:39 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 JOURNEYIST might not have been able to show her best or run her race on April 2nd acting up in the GATE and raced with the WIDE trip and the WEATHER conditions that made it tough to make up ground in the stretch. The same consideration can be given to **#6 STORMY EMPIRE** on April 2nd with the similar "tough to make up ground in the stretch" WEATHER condition and showing run with the less than ideal (TACTIC-) run racing in TRAFFIC.

The pace for those two should be contentious with #3 FIRST KITTEN (BIAS aided win on April 2nd) and #4 TRIP TO FREEDOM (REGRESS? From March 19th) keeping each other honest on the lead today and even #8 RAINY MOUNTAIN capable of showing tactical speed. Under the radar, **#1 MAGNA MASSA** also could show more early speed. She has shown a pattern of SLOG in her most recent starts, though also run in spots including a BTL effort in her own right on April 2nd.

Hawthorne Race 9

Post Time 6:06 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Many of the runners in the finale return from a common Special Weight race here back on March 26th. That includes place finisher #8 RUSSIAN HAMMER one that was able to CLOSE late from well off the pace, a familiar RunStyle for her especially with a pattern of SLOG going back to his debut - the closing RunStyle with gate issues should be assessed as far as value with that projected trip and following the track profile throughout the card.

The March 26th pace was honest and could upgrade **#2 LUCKY AIN'T ENOUGH** as one of the pacesetters especially as he was coming off the 128-day layoff that day. **#5 MERLOTTI** also could project to move forward as his excuses began in the GATE very fractious and briefly had his legs over the gate. The GATE issues and poor start also in play for older, five-year-old #6 TENPAK making their belated second start off a 593-day layoff, some concerns all around with those combination of factors.

#7 SARAH'S BOY BLUE will make a belated second start here. Going back to last August 22nd at Prairie Meadows he broke SLOG and showed some run in spots even visuals to suggest they are capable of more early speed. The layoff return is also in play for **#9 BACK TO SELLING** though one that has a look at this level with some early speed, figures in OFR and class at stacks up as more of a lateral move from the statebred Special Weight races last year at Canterbury.

Handicapping Analysis
Sun April 23rd, 2023

Jim's Picks

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

2 Wildwood's Warrior 7 Option 3 Golden Chella

A good race to open up the card as there's a few different ways to look at this field. Not a ton of pace in here as I'll give the nod to 2-WILDWOOD'S WARRIOR as he gets a little class relief into this spot. He ran a decent race in his first start of the meet and figures to improve off that effort. Look for him to rate close and run by in the lane. The pace appears to come from 7-OPTION on the outside as he comes in off the claim. He set the pace in a race that didn't have much pace last out but was still unable to hold on in the lane. Figure he is sent away once again and should be in the mix the entire way. 3-GOLDEN CHELLA wired a field at Mahoning Valley last out and could be the other to show speed in here. He's been a different horse since stretching out two races back and runs for a barn that has shipped them in ready this meet.

Hawthorne Race 2 - PLAY OF THE DAY

Post Time 2:57 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

4 Shackleford Strong 1 Restoring Hope 3 Easter Music

Competitive bunch for the second but there's not a ton of pace in here. Thinking 4-SHACKLEFORD STRONG is sent away for the lead with the potential to wire this field. He has run two good races on the meet and posted a solid figure in his last as well. Thinking he clears and never looks back. I really liked the effort out of 1-RESTORING HOPE in his last as he faced what was a tough bunch at this level in that spot. Time Heist, the winner of that race, has been competitive against better and was able to drop into that spot and win. Restoring Hope moved forwardly in the lane and should be closing well again late. 3-EASTER MUSIC is going to benefit from the added distance in here as he figures to rate and run on in the lane. He was hung a bit wide when making his move last out but may have needed that race as well. Let's see if he shows more in here.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:24 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

1 Last Martini 5 Pinedale 2 Ioya Again

This race is really tough and I could be really right or really wrong in here. With some taking class drops and some maybe not on their best surface I'm going to take a chance with 1-LAST MARTINI, figuring I will get a price. He makes his first start in seven months and ultimately may be getting ready for Canterbury but his works are consistent, the barn places their horses well, and he may get enough pace to chase. Let's see if he is ready off the rest. 5-PINEDALE takes a big class drop off a race that wasn't terrible while facing so much better last out. He's run well over the track and is the most likely winner to me....but why the class plunge? 2-IOYA AGAIN is another with so much back class but he is also likely best suited for the turf. Maybe this is just a spot to get a start but he does have some races on paper that would make him competitive on the main track as well.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:51 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

2 Khozan's Success | 6 First Masamune | 4 Cadet Corps

Had to take a few looks at this race and try to figure out the pace scenario in here. Thinking 2-KHOZAN'S SUCCESS is the one that makes the top and carves out the early fractions. He makes his first start off the layoff but has been a nice pattern of drills toward the return. His best shot is to try to make the top and never look back. 6-FIRST MASAMUNE chased in his last out and was left to chase Gita's Lad the whole way around. He likes this Hawthorne strip and while I don't expect he is as close early, a repeat of his last start makes him a contender once again. 4-CADET CORPS is going to need pace to chase and he ships in from Gulfstream. The biggest question for him is how he will handle the conventional dirt surface but his dirt works show that shouldn't be an issue.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:18 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

3 Hop Away Hottie | 4 Tar Heel Girl | 1 Joyzella

Maidens around two turns with another bunch that doesn't appear to have a ton of early speed. Thinking 3-HOP AWAY HOTTIE could contend on the stretch in distance as she comes out of a key maiden sprint, won by Mendrel on March 16. Tanner Tracy has had a great start to the meet but it is a bit interesting here that regular barn rider Centeno chooses Climb to Glory over this one. 4-TAR HEEL GIRL made a pair of grass starts in Florida before shipping up North for this race. She has a really nice work over the track as I wouldn't be surprised to see some more speed from her early in here. 1-JOYZELLA ran a good second in her first start of the meet around two turns and ran a respectable third while sprinting last out. Bug rider Giles has had a solid meet and if it rains this runner's chances will only improve.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 4:45 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

8 Good Mongolia | 9 Long Tall Woman | 3 Raceday Attire

I may be overthinking this as normally this would be a slam dunk for me to select Long Tall Woman and move on. A recent scratch from her from a race where she appeared to be an easy winner leaves some concern but she has worked well and maybe I'm looking too much into it. In the end, her price will be very short so I'll pick her second. 8-GOOD MONGOLIA surprised everyone last out as she appeared to be more of a route and turf horse, but was a winner in a dirt sprint at a big price. On top of it she did it while showing speed. The was a good race off the rest and no reason to think she can't repeat that performance. 3-RACEDAY ATTIRE ran a really nice race, winning in upset fashion, against allowance company last out. Mojica gave her a great ride along the rail as she pressed through and ran on to a solid score.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:12 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

3 Dark Hedges | 1 Z U Soon | 2 Try Try Again

Not going to try to overthink this one as 3-DARK HEDGES has found the board in his last seven starts, including a solid win last out. He battled the pace in that spot and emerged clear late. I don't expect as much pace pressure today as he should be able to clear and never look back. 1-Z U SOON has been very good at Hawthorne, finding the board in 16 of 36 career starts over the track. He steps up off a good win in his last but returns off just an easy work into this spot. 2-TRY TRY AGAIN has had poor starts in his last couple of starts but recovered to run on nicely late in his last. He needs some pace to chase but could pick up the pieces while at a price.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 5:39 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

3 First Kitten 6 Stormy Empire 5 Journeyist

If Raceday Attire runs well earlier in the card, it will flatter the chances of many in here who were defeated by her on April 2. 3-FIRST KITTEN was the one carving out the early fractions in that race as she battled to the wire in that spot. Expect to see speed once again and let's see if she can clear and never look back. 6-STORMY EMPIRE has run her best races at Hawthorne and she always seems to be closing ground late. She probably took too much action at the windows in her last but is worth a look in all gimmicks. 5-JOURNEYIST is another Boyce runner that I expect to see more of for her third start of the meet. I liked that she improved with the addition of Lasix in her last and could easily see continued improvement in here.

Hawthorne Race 9

Post Time 6:06 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

8 Russian Hammer 5 Merlotti 2 Lucky Ain't Enough

Solid maiden group closes the day. 8-RUSSIAN HAMMER has unfortunately raced against a pair of strong Rivelli-trained runners in his last couple. After winning on opening day, Act A Fool came back with an impressive allowance score last week. Last out Russian Hammer was left to chase Onasa, another well intended runner. Let's see if there's enough pace to chase here but he should be closing well in the lane. 5-MERLOTTI was closing quickly behind Russian Hammer in that spot as well. That was his debut as he got away slowly from the rail before running on late. He comes in off a recent sharp drill and figures to be a solid threat while at a price. 2-LUCKY AIN'T ENOUGH is another Tracy trained runner with a shot at a price. He pressed Onasa in that spot and battled into the lane. There's a chance the he could shake loose early in here and wire this field.

Handicapping Analysis
Sun April 23rd, 2023

Ron's Picks

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

2 Wildwood's Warrior - 7/2 | 6 Impulsiveness - 5/2 | 3 Golden Chella - 5/1 | 7 Option - 4/1

2-WILDWOOD'S WARRIOR looks like the best speed. He ran well in his first start of the meet but might have been in a little tough. Faces slightly easier today. Can take it all the way. You know that 6-IMPULSIVENESS has been meeting better and should benefit from the drop in class. However, his better races have been on turf or synthetic and he finished up the track in his two dirt starts. Plus, he, with only one exception, has always come from far off the pace. Chances are the pace won't set up for him. 3-GOLDEN CHELLA and 7-OPTION both have some speed but neither appears to be as quick as top choice.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 2:57 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

2 D'fever - 6/1 | 4 Shackleford Strong - 7/2 | 1 Restoring Hope - 8/1

2-D'FEVER was favored in last when dropped to meet rivals like these but he lost all chance when he broke in the air. He recovered well and finished fourth but he started too far back and the race was too short. Might be a bit overlooked this time because of his perceived lackluster finish but he should be a major player. 4-SHACKLEFORD STRONG could turn out to be the lone speed if top choice doesn't speed to the lead. He ran well in both local starts, finishing second in his local debut and wiring the field in last. He will be right there throughout even if he has to fight for the lead. 1-RESTORING HOPE could be the main recipient if the top pair fight it out on the front end. He finished second in last despite a somewhat sluggish start. Could have dead aim late today. 6-D'YANK showed little in last but he is eligible to improve in his second start of the meet, especially with the drop to the lowest level of his career. Good work since might have been the tune up he needed.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:24 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

5 Pinedale - 2/1 | 3 Move On Over - 4/1 | 2 Ioya Again - 5/2

Not sure 5-PINEDALE is a standout here but he has been splitting better fields and he's dropping to the lowest level of his career while making his second start of the year. He doesn't have the running style that has won so many races this meet but there are really no defined front runners in this race and his talented rider will have him within striking distance throughout. Would imagine that 3-MOVE ON OVER, with the addition of blinkers and the stretch in distance, is the one most likely to get the early lead. If he hadn't faded so badly in previous route races, he would have been my top selection but he still does loom as the one to catch. 2-IOYA AGAIN has been primarily a turf runner but he has had some decent races on dirt. However, he does his best running from off the pace and there probably won't be enough pace to set up for his late run.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:51 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

2 Khozan's Success - 5/2 | 4 Cadet Corps - 3/1 | 6 First Masamune - 7/2

I really didn't want to select 2-KHOZAN'S SUCCESS. I know his barn brings them ready to run but he's been off eight months and coming back in a route race. He does look like the best of the speed however. If he can get to the lead relatively unchallenged and take a breather, he should be able to last. 4-CADET CORPS was the other choice. But he's had 18 races and not one of them was on dirt. His works suggest he can handle the surface but one never knows. 6-FIRST MASAMUNE races evenly which could greatly help his chances. He's not as quick as Khozan's Success but he could be leading the second tier, ready to take over if that rival falters.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:18 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

1 Joyzella - 7/2 | 4 Tar Heel Girl - 9/5 | 2 Climb to Glory - 5/1

1-JOYZELLA might have found her spot. This filly has had several competitive races but her best effort probably was her lone two-turn race. Would like her better if she was facing other Illinois breds but she just might turn out to be the best of these. The beautifully-bred 4-TAR HEEL HOTTIE is hard to gauge. She sports the highest speed figures of any in here but both of her starts were on turf and she finished far behind the winners in both. On the other hand, she's obviously meeting easier in her local debut and she did have a brilliant local drill. Would not surprise if she won by daylight but also wouldn't surprise if she didn't win. Stretcher 2-CLIMB TO GLORY could be sent right to the lead and dare the rest to catch her.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 4:45 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

9 Long Tall Woman - 7/5 | 3 Raceday Attire - 8/1 | 8 Good Mongolia - 9/2

9-LONG TALL WOMAN has been in good form for a long time. Winner of last three scored in seven of her 17 races lifetime. She's capable of winning on or off the pace. Can extend her streak to four. Have to give 3-RACEDAY ATTIRE another look. She scored a narrow allowance win in last over a field that wasn't overly tough but her speed figure from that race as well as some of her others suggest that she could be as fast as top choice. 8-GOOD MONGOLIA might not grab the early lead but she's never going to be far out of it. Like the tenacity she displayed in her last couple races. Could be in the thick of things throughout.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:12 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

3 Dark Hedges - 5/2 | 6 Follow the Signs - 3/1 | 4 Medal of Fact - 5/1

Tough little race. It would be hard to ignore any of these runners. But, by a very slim margin, going to give the edge to 3-DARK HEDGES. He ran well in all his local starts, finishing in the money in all six while winning twice. Not sure it will play out that way but he might be a teeny weenie bit quicker than the rest. 6-FOLLOW THE SIGNS won last two after finishing second in his first start of the meet. Like top pick, he has plenty of speed but doesn't necessarily need the early lead to win. 7-ASTI SKY completes the sprint-route-sprint sequence. He tired late in his last, the route but he's likely to finish with plenty left with the turn back in distance. 4-MEDAL OF FACT fought hard for the lead in last only to come up a little short at the finish, a length behind Follow The Signs.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 5:39 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

8 Rainy Mountain - 6/1 | 3 First Kitten - 2/1 | 4 Trip to Freedom - 12/1 | 6 Stormy Empire - 5/2

Going to take a flyer here with 8-RAINY MOUNTAIN. She could have a tough time is the early speed bias continues but love the way she finishes her races. There should be plenty of pace to set up for her late run. Could be poised to surprise. 3-FIRST KITTEN and 4-TRIP TO FREEDOM could be fighting it out for the lead. First Kitten would seem to have the advantage there but she does tend to tire late. Trip to Freedom wired the field in her first start here but she is another that has had her troubles trying to carry her speed all the way. 6-STORMY EMPIRE is another likely to finish well but she often teases. Wouldn't leave her out of vertical gimmicks but maybe only on the bottom.

Hawthorne Race 9

Post Time 6:06 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

5 Merlotti - 6/1 | 2 Lucky Ain't Enough - 9/2 | 8 Russian Hammer - 7/2 | 1 Blame Shifter - 5/1

5-MERLOTTI isn't a strong choice but this well-bred gelding ran gamely in his debut. He got off to a slow start and was 17 lengths back at one point but he did make up about 10 and got up to finish third. This race is longer which should suit his pedigree. He had two good drills since that race. Could surprise in this one. There doesn't appear to be much speed in this race and 2-LUCKY AIN'T ENOUGH could be the best of it. He needed last, his first race in four months. Could carry his speed much farther with that prep behind him. 8-RUSSIAN HAMMER came from far back to finish second in last, finishing well ahead of top choice. However, he hadn't shown much before that start. Can he do it again? 1-BLAME SHIFTER finished second as the favorite in his career debut. Can improve off that effort but he's also moving up to take on what should be better rivals.