Handicapping Analysis
Thu May 4th, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 TAPIT SAM continues to hold his form and given another look back at today's N3 claiming condition presenting value. The race shape and WEATHER played against him behind open length winner, The Last Fact on April 20th.

Many from that 4/20 race return in this spot and should note there was a BLANKET finish for the minors that included #2 IRONMAN RICHIE and #3 BOURBON TEDDY, both projected to go off shorter than TAPIT SAM and all recorded the same C+ OptixGRADE. Part of that race shape was due to #1 TRIPLE CHROME standing in the GATE as the doors opened and projected to be part of the early pace that day. His visuals PRERACE- left something to be desired and could have played a role in overall being off that day. #4 SURPRISE CAT is the one new face making his first start at this level and could move up with that change where #5 TIMEHASCOME also a subtle new face one that is stepping up the N3 condition coming off a pair of favorable trips.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 2:57 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

In terms of pace, **#1 WILDWOOD SECRET** could fall into the right trip (Quad I Square) for the distance tracking behind #4 CHOPPER sitting with first run.

In addition to CHOPPER, trainer Brian Cook will send out **#5 DEVIL'S RULE**, a runner still looking for their first win this season though has some buried form and figures that fits at this level and in line with the more "obvious" contenders. One of those being, #3 HATCHET CREEK with DiZeo "heating" up as of late could be on his side. Overall, a shorter price is the concern with this one that seems to need everything in his favor to win. #6 BAREFOOTBOOTLEGGER had everything in his favor on April 16th when many of his main contenders scratched out of the race making him a standout by default.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:24 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 BE MY BESTIE should have the edge in this field from recency, improving numbers and early speed. They were slightly carried by the track profile on April 2nd though the two prior starts also stack up to the form of others in this field.

#4 COWGIRL FRANKIE has run competitive race and some of the stronger figures in this field and could benefit from the recency as she returns here in the third start back off the layoff. With that said, she requires a trip as one that does her better running late from off the pace. She returns from a common race with #3 FREEDOM ATTACK on 4/18 at FanDuel and returning to Hawthorne, a course she seems to prefer.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:51 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Regression was expected for **#2 STAN THE CAMERAMAN** after the big effort here back on March 23rd. While he did take a slight step back on April 16th, he still showed a lot of run staying on as the BOS against (X_FLOW) to hold second. His early speed and race shape could create a pace advantage (Quad I) in today's race.

#5 NORMANDY ANGEL is on the softer side number wise, though is a runner that has shown improvement with each start this season and another move forward puts him right into the mix. In addition he finds the class drop at that timing off his form cycle that could be the key.

#3 NOBLE CREEKER recorded a solid speed figure that move up him in this race keying off the September 30th figure earned here last summer (9/24) against Special Weight company. Granted his better numbers to date have been recorded on the turf, he also has yet to race at this lower level and could show improvement in this second start of the cycle. The return race 12-days ago was with a SLOG and not asked for run in a race that had minimal change in running order. His turf numbers are right in line with #6 SANTINO'S FANTASY one that has not shown much progression in his races to date recording mid 60's OptixFIG that should transfer to this level and circuit, though also projects to be a shorter price here.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 RUSSIAN HAMMER returns to the maiden claiming level for the first time since his BTL debut back on December 17th. As a runner that has current form and a subtle "every other" pattern he should be in the right spot here and logical as the favorite. His stablemate #4 GUST OF WIND has shown run at this level though the tendency to be his own worst enemy with the pattern of gate issues (SLOG, TROUBLE_S) in each start.

#7 LIGHTNING CASHES recorded a B OptixGRADE in his debut just missing here back in December. His races since lacked excuse especially as the favorite on March 23rd. With that said, he will make his first start off the claim for a *very live barn in Elias Lopez* and with Hernandez aboard that puts him back on the radar.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 4:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#7 WATCHIN THE WHEELS could also be sitting on a peak effort today as she returns to the route distance with progressive form (GRADE/FIG) in this third start back off the layoff. She also has upside with the IMPROVE OptixNOTE (and CLOSE) earned on April 16th.

#2 LINDALOUIMAGE also projects upside (PREP on 3/16) as she makes her second start back off the bench. Her trip began at the GATE and was not asked for her best (TACTIC-, NO_PUSH) while WIDE from the outside post. It would have been preferred to have seen her back quicker than the 48-day break, though price compensation should be there.

As far as morning line favorite, #3 ON A TOUR she has races that make her a major player though those races take going back to 2022 as her form this season only has her as a fringe player and that is concerning as a form reversal is required here and price compensation as well. Her stablemate **#4 WEEKEND PASS** is "slower" though pair of that due to her RunStyle (Quad IV Square) and one that is severely pace dependent. She has lacked the pace to close into this season though when she had the pace to close at last year recorded a BTL B OptixGRADE at this level finishing second on December 11th, a race also run on the quick one week turnaround.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:12 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

As noted earlier on the card, trainer Elias Lopez has been sending out live runners this meet and returns in this race with a pair with a case to be made for both. **#3 FREE LOVE** showed sneaky run in her HS Indy debut and was bet down early before drifting up showing up on this circuit for her second start on June 3rd. She broke her maiden off the layoff over this course recording one of her stronger figures to date and comes in with a second off pattern with the key distance change (ONE_TURN) that could again present a move forward with the shift to this circuit. Stablemate #6 DESSERT FIRST was entered in an N1X allowance race back on April 23rd though a vet scratch that day will land here still retaining Olaf Hernandez, the rider named that day.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 5:39 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

As the projected favorite, #7 UNIFIED DREAMS fits in that role. He has been given the 43-day freshening since recording a top 93 OptixFIG effort (and taxing/HARD) win back in March at the Fair Grounds. His overall form/figures stack up on par here for connections that have been sending out some live runners. #9 PATH TO SUCCESS was able to transfer his Fair Grounds form to a competitive, BTL effort here on April 13th. He will be tested to hold his form and figures, something that has been tougher for this horse and could be on the "downswing" of his form cycle pattern. Holding form also comes into play for #6 HIGH BROW, a player off his most recent effort, though those races being "new tops" and had to work for both place finishes after poor starts as factors to consider here.

Looking to get creative outside that more "logical" group with horses holding upside: **#4 MIDNIGHT ROYAL** a lightly seasoned runner wheels right back in two weeks from the layoff return sprint that had him resenting KICKBACK early though showed a sneaky closing run behind the pacesetting winner. The timing coming right back suggests some intent and with the distance change (and kickback trip) should also see a tactical change from Roman looking to place them on the lead and could be a pacesetting threat here. **#8 BEN DREAMING** will make his Hawthorn debut and first start against winners. With that said, he comes in from competitive maiden races at Oaklawn Park this year and brings in progressive form as upside that should transfer here and makes him competitive with this group.

Hawthorne Race 9

Post Time 6:06 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

A competitive race to close out the card: **#1 MERLOTTI** arguably ran the "best" race back on April 23rd despite the 4th place result; a BTL effort and still recording a B OptixGRADE to suggest he can compete and run as a contender back under similar conditions.

#4 WINNEMAC AVENUE was overmatched this season at the Oaklawn Park Special Weight condition and should see him move up and compete with the shift to this circuit.

#5 EVEN THE WIND was given a mention in a "Hawthorne Live" broadcast back on March 31st upgraded off a very sneaky debut (2/18) showing a ton of run while not asked to run. He improved off that debut race as expected with the B- OptixGRADE and still with a less than ideal trip that might have cost him a better placing, if not the win. Class wise this is a lateral move and should be able to hold his form on this circuit and one to follow later on shifting back to the turf and with the opportunity to run at the statebred conditions.

His stablemate #3 MINNESOTA MOON came up short without much excuse on April 13th. One could argue, he might have needed the race coming off the slight 47-day break on April 13th though overall had little excuse with a softer pace up front and still NO_FINISH. Longshot **#7 ANCIENT MAN** coming out of that same race found himself against the track profile/flow finishing third and upgraded making a MOVE against (X_BIAS) the course favoring runners toward the inside.

Grass is also noted for #6 THREE ROUGH SHODS as Robertson had him entered looking for turf earlier this year at the Fair Grounds and unable to get into or the surface for those races.