Handicapping Analysis
Fri May 5th, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Churchill Downs Race 5

Post Time 11:43 AM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 SMILE HAPPY is the value in this race that should be present with the complexion of this race and one that fits as a contender. He showed quality in graded stakes company as a juvenile/sophomore and has returned as an older horse in top form. He showed his class picking up the allowance win at 9f returning from a 313-day layoff recording a field high 107 OptixFIG. The Oaklawn Mile (G3) placement could have been less than ideal wheeling back in just 16-days and the inside trip with KICKBACK and rider TACTIC- also doing him no favors.

The race shape should set up for SMILE HAPPY given the early pace; a pace that should be contentious with both #1 ART COLLECTOR and #4 WEST WILL POWER in Quad I above the ParLine - runners that are also listed as the first and second choice on the morning line. SMILE HAPPY should find first run on #3 RICH STRIKE and #2 LAST SAMURAI.

#7 GIANT GAME will be tested for stamina here (along with #6 MILLIKEN) and even some intent questions as the connection were also entered as MTO in an allowance here on 4/29.

Churchill Downs Race 6

Post Time 12:26 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Finishing ability is key over this course and with today's race shape. The preference sides with #6 MCKULICK despite the layoff over stablemate #7 SHANTISARA overall and with the slight value compensation - though they face some tough competition and must run a top effort to win.

#8 NEW YEAR'S EVE should not be dismissed. She is proven over this course and likely intent for this race making her return at the Fair Grounds on March 25th and that 3rd place finish is upgraded recording B OptixGRADE/BTL effort with TACTIC-and all around should move forward off that effort.

#2 DIDIA the winner of that March 25th stakes race will make her stateside graded stakes debut. She is as game as a racemare can be. She has shown GRIT, the will to win in each race - a unique/rare quality that is tough to ignore.

Churchill Downs Race 7

Post Time 1:09 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#9 MUNNYS GOLD could be the shortest priced favorite on the weekend and off her races to date the clear filly to beat. She has shown brilliant speed and consistently fast speed figures that stand out over her competition.

#7 POSITANO SUNSET has her work cut out for her in order to catch MUNNYS GOLD though capable to pick up runners looking to go with that speed filly early. SUNSET has buried form as well as form here at Churchill Downs and improving as she returned from the layoff as a sophomore. While Wilkes was "live" during spring Keeneland meet, the TRAFFIC win making up ground against the race flow (VS) was a strong effort last month and should continue to build off those races with another top effort possible here.

Churchill Downs Race 9

Post Time 3:04 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The morning line (or above) is value on **#7 SOCIETY** returning in this competitive Grade 1 event. She has upside and intent with the return works in what can be assessed as a prep coming back in the Madison (G1) at the one-turn distance last month at Keeneland for Asmussen, a colder barn during that meet. The intention looked in play for this race with the steady Fair Grounds works and the work on April 3rd at Churchill Downs, just 5-days out from the Madison. She has trained forwardly and picking up a rider change to Jose Ortiz suggest intent as well. As far as the pace, she could present as the controlling speed with the way this race stacks up. There are others in here that have run on or near the lead, though have do so with softer paces and not close to the type of early speed SOCIETY possesses.

Churchill Downs Race 10

Post Time 3:51 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Chad Brown sending out a group in this race: #2 LIGURIA will make her seasonal return in this spot and off some strong works coming back to start off the season. Number wise she is on the softer side but could present that maturity figure move forward keeping in mind those late season numbers. Along with the required improvement, she still must she where she fits on class noting the Jimmy Durante (G3) has not been a productive event - the horses from that event are a combined 0/20 next out. Her stablemate #5 PRELIMINARY has the benefit of recency starting off her career this March with a strong win on debut. She recorded a solid 97 OptixFIG and B+ OptixGRADE to suggest she can take a step up in class. PRELIMINARY did have pace to close into, something

#11 REVALITA did not have making a CLOSE into a Very Slow (X_FLOW) pace recording a B OptixGRADE in graded stakes company back in March. She earned a follow off that effort and the B OptixGRADE suggest she can compete back under similar conditions and was validated with #9 PAPILIO (B- in the Herecomesthebride) coming back from her place finish that day to win the Appalachian (G2) surviving an inquiry in a controversial call. As far as race strength the Herecomesthebride (G3) has been productive event with many improving next out with improving speed figures including Cairo Consort, the show finish retuning with a solid place finish in the Appalachian (G2) and Danse Macabre winning a listed stakes turf sprint at CD on Wednesday (5/3) and Blind Spot the unofficial winner (DQ) of the Star Shoot Stakes on 4/29 at Woodbine.