Handicapping Analysis
Sun May 28th, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Perez has the field covered top to bottom in terms of the pair with their complementary RunStyle. **#5 SOVIET STANDARD** has shown legit early speed and from the Plot visuals should have the edge (Quad I Square furthest Left) over Circle rivals, #2 I'M YOUR CAPTAIN and #6 CHAD'S FLASH looking to keep the pace honest. Should that "Fire" Contention come into play, **#3 TEA WITH LEMON** will look to take advantage as the stronger (Large Quad IV Square) closer in this race as they cut back to one turn.

#1 HURTS SO BAD could also find themselves on the right trip and returning to a top effort from the 42-day freshening to reset the form cycle. Meraz looked to have this horse in peak condition back on March 5th coming off a similar 48-day freshening and tough to knock the effort finishing in a photo at the wire. As far as trip, they show up favorable as a Quad I Square and ideally looking for that first run on Soviet Standard and the jump on Tea With Lemon.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 2:57 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This is a tricky race and appears open to many in this group with the lower OFR for today's condition. Many in this field have run this season and come up short both on the win end and in terms of OptixGRADES below the B OptixGRADE, considered a winning effort for the level. Looking at the Plot, the pace should be contentious though the race strength also shown on that weaker side with the field below the ParLine.

That could present a hidden edge to **#3 LUKE ATTACK** (Standard Square) over Circles #4 A P BLAZING GREEN and #6 MAN ON ATTACK. #5 SILVER CHILLER improved on May 7th off some subtle trips in his first two starts this season, though still has shown continued GATE issues.

#2 J J'S SOLUTION as the Large Quad IV Square will be running on late and a case to be made he is sitting on a peak effort in this third start off the layoff along with the subtle changes as Mojica jumps aboard and they return to the statebred level. With that said, he has had many chances, is a closer and has come up short where price compensation is required.

#1 NAGY AND DA BEARS might be wheeled right back for this race as trainer Witthauer also has A P BLAZING GREEN in the field. As noted the OFR being lower today and is even lower than the May 21st race last week when in for the lower maiden claiming tag. The placement that day moved Nagy and Da Bears up on the drop and with intent though as shown in the OptixNOTES, they were eliminated at the start and the rider that day Lezcano, kept this horse X_WIDE and not asked (NO_PUSH) for run.

First time starter, #7 MARE'S GUNNER was entered to debut back on March 11th at Oaklawn Park in Special Weight company at a mile though a vet scratch unable to make the race. Without question this is an easier spot though as far as conditioning there is a gap in the published works overall and most recently from April 28th until May 21st that should be considered.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:24 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 ONE WAY HOME could get the trip today as a Quad I Square and chasing behind #2 CHOPPER, the projected “lone” speed, though one that has shown NO_FINISH and should be similar in today’s field represented by the Large Circle.

From the Plot visuals, there is a lot of separation to the others in the field and for the Quad IV Squares, #1 DEVIL’S RULE, #4 IDEA MAN and #7 EASTER MUSIC. Coming off the layoff, ***#3 IMPERIAL MOMENT*** could have conditioning concerns, though at the same time has shown competitive races at this level and for Childers in the past that keep them in the mix at a price.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:51 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 DRAGON DREW looks pointed to this spot returning to the TURF and back for a seconds tart this season. When he showed up here on April 2nd, he looked short (PREP) and the lack of intent on the day was compounded by the WEATHER conditions and SLOG start that left him against the profile when making the late CLOSE.

#5 WINGING WAYS has had just limited chances to run on the turf, though in those races showed he can handle the surface and transfer his current form. That is all that is needed to compete today as he has form, early speed and in the right portion of his form cycle coming back to the claiming level and reset from the win and peak effort recorded on April 9th.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Watkins reclaimed #1 FOGGY KITTEN, a mare he has trained throughout her career. Felix has also been aboard for much of their success and this year in the money finishes which has, along with the lower level claiming wins last year, kept her eligible for this condition. She is most effective when on the lead and “LONE” a trip she could find here from the rail and given the presence of her OptixPLOT position.

That Position is combined with a Circle, indicating a lack of finish and scenario for #3 AUNT STELLA and #8 MI CRESCENDO will look to capitalize on based on the position (Quad I/II) as Squares – indicating finishing ability. They should have first run on ***#4 ARCH FLYER*** one that will be running on late (Quad IV) and with a strong closing kick (Square) should be along for a share. The Plot suggests she fits this race something that is tougher to see from the recent running lines and finishing positions alone.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 4:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Clearly the conditions from Race 2 and Race 6 are quite different, but also serve as a good example to show class where the horses in Race 2 sit below (suggest weakness) the ParLine the horses here in Race 6 sit above the ParLine to suggest a stronger event for the level. Trainer Scott Becker will show up with a pair in this race. #5 FAST JACK could require a race returning from the layoff, though has form here at Hawthorne and upside as still a lightly raced runner picking this spot for his four-year-old debut. **#7 W W SCOUT’S HONOR** shows up here with likely intent especially with Deshawn Parker named to ride today and this being their only mount on the card. The March 30th race here looked to be every bit of a “PREP” and projecting the IMPROVE, they showed that against a higher class and purse ($105k) on May 6th at Oaklawn Park. As far as **#1 WALKER’S WIN**, he also ran on May 6th at Oaklawn Park and also ran against a much tougher group in the Lake Hamilton Stakes. That placement was likely “taking a shot” especially in terms of timing and form cycle following a career high 99 OptixFIG earned in his March 30th seasonal return win here at Hawthorne.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:12 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 SIVAKO returns to the turf and while it could be argued the main track is his preferred surface; would rather take the assessment the class, circuit, barn change and maturity created the improvement in his December maiden win and figure improvement in April to transfer that form today to the grass. Number wise #10 G T FIVE HUNDRED also fits on par and form cycle (every other pattern) should he transfer that form to the turf and from a physical standpoint there are no knocks with the surface switch.

#5 MCMONEY has the benefit of turf experience exiting the April 21st allowance at Keeneland. While he was noncompetitive on the day, the outside post, higher (STRONG) condition played against him and to his credit was able to improve his number. His 84 OptixFIG from that race stacks up above OFR today. Number wise #9 ACT A FOOL also has OptixFIG above par though was aided by the race flow and track profile especially from the April 9th BIAS day – a profile and race outcome that played against SIVAKO. The pace projects to be solid with the 40 SpeedRate and lack of Surface/Distance data with many on the surface or distance change.

That pace scenario could assist #1 STAR NATION, one that still has hurdles stepping up to take on winners, first turf and has also finished behind others in this field – though will note he has some excuses and showed run (OptixNOTES) in those events last year. #8 RUSSIAN HAMMER also steps up to take on winners where the class test comes into play with some of his stronger races at the claiming level, though the turf intent is in play by Perez keying off the May 14th scratch when the races were taken off the turf.

DiVito will send out a pair in this race for Doubledown Stables including **#4 BEN DREAMING** in to make his turf debut. While there has not BEN intent for grass, there also has not been much opportunity especially this year racing at Oaklawn Park. Overall improvement is expected from the May 4th race, a race that began after a long DELAY and was never able to get into the running with the X_WIDE trip and handling, NO_PUSH, noting a rider change here. Hernandez was aboard last out and jumps on stablemate #7 ELI'S PROMISE, one that in addition to trying the turf for the first time will also try the two turns as well.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 5:39 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 TAHOE RUN is the obvious contender in this race and logical as the "horse to beat." He will return to Hawthorne where he was competitive (B OptixGRADE) last year at the Special Weight level and continued to hold his form and figures at Oaklawn Park that standout against the others with similar experience in this field.

Number wise #7 SHARP STICK must show a move forward compared to Tahoe Run exiting the Oaklawn Park (similar for #3 GONE AGAIN out of the maiden claiming races) meet though should improve with the class/circuit change as well as the distance switch back to a sprint.. Some intent could be in play adding the blinkers and also for the connections as Doubledown has runners earlier on the card.

#4 ARMAVIR was given a look on May 18th exiting a higher caliber race back in December at Meydan, that race including stakes runners. Cold on the board and from the visuals, it appeared Armavir, still needed some experience and fitness (possibly TURF) and that could suggest intent coming right back in just 10-days for this race. Perez also returns with #2 RUSSIAN STANDARD in his second start this meet and was not as intended as his place finishing stablemate, Wolf Hunter, back on May 11th.

Handicapping Analysis
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Jim's Picks

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

3 Tea With Lemon 1 Hurts So Bad 2 I'm Your Captain

Despite the shorter field it looks like there is a decent amount of early pace. 3-TEA WITH LEMON should be able to rate and rally with the turn back to the sprint in here. 1-HURTS SO BAD will take action on the drop. He just needs to settle a bit off the early fractions and come running in the lane. 2-I'M YOUR CAPTAIN was disappointing in his last. If he can repeat his performance from two back he merits a look.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 2:57 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

4 A P Blazing Green 2 J J's Solution 7 Mare's Gunner

Two from the Witthauer barn in here but 4- A P BLAZING GREEN really the only one that fits. The switch to Tavares in the saddle may put him over the top. 2-J J'S SOLUTION is long overdue for the first victory. He does have some ability though and should pick up the pieces late. 7-MARE'S GUNNER runs for a barn that is typically good first out. Lasix for the debut and decent works coming into here as well.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:24 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

7 Easter Music 8 Risky Boy 1 Devil's Rule

There should be enough early speed to set things up for the closers. 7-EASTER MUSIC likes this track and figures to rate and run on late. The same goes for 8-RISKY BOY as Mojica picks up the mount in here. 1-DEVIL'S RULE could be a sleeper as the other Cook entrant, Chopper, should ensure the fast pace to close into.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:51 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

2 Grand Hideaway 5 Winging Ways 8 Wildwood Secret

A turf sprint with a decent amount of early pace. Look to 2-GRAND HIDEAWAY to settle in the second flight and close well. He has a win at this level over this course. 5-WINGING WAYS is fast early. Let's see if he tries to steal this one. 8-WILDWOOD SECRET is the other to push the pace. The unknown is how he will take to the turf.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:18 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

8 Mi Crescendo 3 Aunt Stella 1 Foggy Kitten

A few with speed in here maybe sets it up for 8-MI CRESCENDO to run on late. She has faced much tougher at Oaklawn this spring and should have a class edge. 3-AUNT STELLA ran huge last out. That race is one she can repeat with the fast pace upfront. 1-FOGGY KITTEN is likely sent for the lead. If she can clear she may get brave early.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 4:45 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

7 W W Scout's Honor 1 Walker's Win 3 W W Hotshot

Really good field here with three from the Becker barn. 7-W W SCOUT'S HONOR has speed but doesn't need the lead to win. He ran a huge race at Oaklawn in his last and likes this track. 1-WALKER'S WIN also has tactical speed. He is undefeated in three Hawthorne starts and comes off a stakes try at Oaklawn last out. 3-W W HOTSHOT may also wing it for the front. He chased Walker's Win last time and battled well into the lane.

Hawthorne Race 7 - PLAY OF THE DAY

Post Time 5:12 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

3 Sivako 9 Act a Fool 10 G T Five Hundred

The race could serve as a prep for the June 25 Hawthorne Derby. 3-SIVAKO has turf experience and runs for very hot connections. He should get enough pace to rate behind and close into late. 9-ACT A FOOL tries the grass as he should be forwardly placed. He has two big efforts and the meet and may try to wire this field. 10-G T FIVE HUNDRED ran big two back and tries the grass once again. He has races that make him very competitive in here.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 5:39 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

7 Sharp Stick 6 Tahoe Run 5 Mamas Fire

Will try to beat the favorite as 7-SHARP STICK is another DiVito in with a big shot. He ran some good Oaklawn races and has worked well over this track. 6-TAHOE RUN is overdue for the maiden score. He tends to rate and run on too late at times. Let's see if he presses the pace earlier today. 5-MAMS FIRE may be a sleeper as he debuts with Lasix. The Illinois-bred chooses to run open with the hopes of grabbing additional purse money.

Handicapping Analysis
Sun May 28th, 2023

Ron's Picks

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

1 Hurts So Bad - 8/5 | 3 Tea With Lemon - 4/1 | 2 I'm Your Captain - 7/2

Not in love with 1-HURTS SO BAD but he does seem to make the most sense. He ran well against better in two of his three races at this meet. The drop to this level could do the trick. 3-TEA WITH LEMON figures prominently. He owns a good closing move, this race is filled with speed, and like top pick, he’s dropping in class. 2-I’M YOUR CAPTAIN didn’t show a thing in his first start against winners but he was super sharp breaking his maiden versus state breds in his previous start. He might be a little quicker from the gate than the rest. We’ll see.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 2:57 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

5 Silver Chiller - 7/2 | 7 Mare's Gunner - 5/2 | 2 J J's Solution - 5/1

5-SILVER CHILLER narrowly lost to the tough Dash To the Cash in last, the third start of his career, and had the lead late. Keeps the hot apprentice in the irons. Can build on that effort and graduate today. 7-MARE’S GUNNER makes his debut for a barn that usually does well with their first-time starters. Inconsistent drills might be a cause for concern but he does deserve the benefit of the doubt. 2-J J’S SOLUTION has had some good races but mostly versus open company. He showed little versus open maidens in last but think that he’ll improve with the move back to Illinois breds.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:24 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

8 Risky Boy - 7/2 | 7 Easter Music - 5/2 | 2 Chopper - 12/1

This seems like a closely-matched field with no standouts. Giving a small nod to 8-RISKY BOY. He’s been in good form all year. He’s been finishing behind some of these rivals lately but might be ready to kick it into another gear. 7-EASTER MUSIC improved with each passing start this year. He displayed better than his average speed in last and finished second. Could be chasing Chopper and be right there if that rival folds late. 2-CHOPPER looks like the best of the speed. However, he does tend to run out of gas late. But, if he isn’t challenged early, he might be able to hang on.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:51 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

2 Grand Hideaway - 3/1 | 4 Dragon Drew - 5/2 | 6 Midnight Blue Note - 5/1

2-GRAND HIDEAWAY should be tough. He’s been running competitively on dirt but think he can kick it into another gear with the move back to grass. He won three of his last five turf sprints. Should add to that success today. 4-DRAGON DREW is capable on or off the pace. He won only two of his 20 turf sprints but still finished in the money another 10 times. 6-MIDNIGHT BLUE NOTE has plenty of past class. He showed little in his recent turf races but he did wake up in last and wired the field on the main track. Maybe he’ll remember what he was best at and come up with a longshot victory.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:18 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

8 Mi Crescendo - 7/2 | 1 Foggy Kitten - 5/2 | 3 Aunt Stella - 3/1

8-MI CRESCENDO ships from a tougher meet and drops in class. She was totally outmatched versus starters in last but she did beat claimers in her previous start. Guessing she'll run by all of them late. 1-FOGGY KITTEN has been in great form. She finished second in her last three races. She was claimed back by these connections after they lost her, via claim, in her previous start. She could fight for the lead from start to finish. 3-AUNT STELLA won her last and could repeat. Like top choice, she does her best running late. Might be able to make it two in a row.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 4:45 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

7 W W Scout's Honor - 3/1 | 1 Walker's Win - 5/2 | 5 Fast Jack - 5/1

Good tough Illinois-bred race. Can make a case for all of them. But going to give the nod to 7-W W SCOUTS HONOR. Others in here have a better record at Hawthorne but his last race at Oaklawn was one of the better efforts of his career, even though he lost. If he runs like that today, he's going to be tough to beat. 1-WALKER'S WIN is a perfect three-for-three at Hawthorne and he won five of his seven races at this distance. He was a bit outclassed in a $150k stakes race at Oaklawn in last but he beat top choice by three in his previous start here. 5-FAST JACK could be the best of the speed. However, he is making his first start of the year. That could be a determining factor if a multi-horse speed duel develops.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:12 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

9 Act a Fool - 5/2 | 6 Bal a Kazoo - 12/1 | 3 Sivako - 6/1 | 5 McMoney - 5/1

Interesting prep for the Hawthorne Derby. None in here are proven turf runners and most of them have never even raced on the surface. Don't really know that 9-ACT A FOOL will race. He's never been on turf but he simply crushed the last two fields he faced on dirt. 6-BAL A KAZOO is the lone turf winner in this field; a feat he accomplished in the first race of his career. He showed little in a stakes race following that win but took eight months off after that race and came back racing with Lasix. His last start was back on the lawn and he pressed the pace early from the outside post before tiring late. But that race should have set him up perfectly for this one. 3-SIVAKO will be coming late. He improved with each passing turf start. Could be motoring late. 5-MCMONEY didn't get close in his lone turf start but he still managed to generate one of the highest turf speed figures from anybody in this field.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 5:39 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

6 Tahoe Run - 2/1 | 8 Sharp Az Nails - 9/2 | 7 Sharp Stick - 4/1 | 1 Larry the Poet - 7/2

6-TAHOE RUN runs by them late. He barely lost his two races here in the fall and has been taking on tougher ever since. He just missed in a much tougher maiden at Oaklawn than he faces today. Should be worth the likely short price. 8-SHARP AS NAILS, like top choice, turns back in distance. His good natural speed helps greatly. He's going to be racing closer to the pace than top choice and that might allow him to make the first move. It could be the winning one. 7-SHARP STICK has been meeting tougher maidens in Arkansas. He's turning back in distance and his sprint "figs" place him squarely in the hunt. 1-LARRY THE POET is certainly worth another look. He races for one of the top barns and he has one of the top riders in his irons. His works seem sufficient. Could be a contender.