Handicapping Analysis
Sat June 10th, 2023

Stakes Spotlight

Belmont Park Race 3

Post Time 11:29 AM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 ELITE POWER merits respect and fits as the horse to beat in this stakes race. He is the most accomplished and versatile runner in the group and proven at the extended sprint distance. He has that distance edge coming into this race over #5 STROBE one that has run shorter and will be tested once again at the graded stakes level.

Geroux rated STROBE against natural running style in the Count Fleet Sprint (G3) at Oaklawn Park and to give this horse his best chance requires a more assertive ride here. That trip is noted with #1 TODAY'S FLAVOR in the field, a horse that could sneak away on the lead if allowed, though will still be tested for class back at the stakes level and win with open company. O'Neill will also send out #3 ANARCHIST a horse that should sit a favorable tracking trip, though also tested for class once again as he comes off a favorable trip picking up the graded stakes win last month at Woodbine.

#2 SYNTHESIS popped with a career best effort in the allowance three weeks ago and another tested for class and form coming off that top effort making his second start of the cycle and in his seven-year-old season. **#6 FEARLESS** will kick off his seven-year-old season in this spot and a curious place to return off the layoff given what would be a more "logical" placement in the Brooklyn (G2) a race he won last year. With that said, the distance change is an unknown, though FEARLESS has run competitive in one-turn mile races and done so against a higher caliber competition in graded stakes company and showed his class consistently to compete. He has the question marks with the distance and layoff, at the same time has plenty of races in his career that fit and worth a stab as he should be one of the longer priced runners in this field.

Belmont Park Race 5

Post Time 12:44 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 CHEZ PIERRE projects to be a heavy favorite in this race and coming off a dominant G1 win has that edge over today's group. There could be some concerns about the change in class and in terms of pace should find a different dynamic here as factors to keep in mind with the expected shorter number. The Makers Mile (G1) has been a productive event with ***#6 EMMANUEL*** returning to improve in the Dinner Party (G3) stakes three weeks ago. He must hold his form here and noted the slow start back at Keeneland should see him closer to the pace pressing Chez Pierre if asked.

#7 FILO DI ARIANNA could drift from the assigned morning line and kept on the radar if that is the case. The public could shy away from him in preference to others and due to not racing on Lasix, something that is a non-issue for this horse. He has buried graded stakes form including an excuse last year in the Jaipur (G1) with trouble at the start and an extra wide trip against both the flow and profile. His true form is represented in the races that followed and coming into this race. He closed ground against a pacesetting winner on April 29th and continued to run on after the wire with visuals to suggest the near one-turn mile distance today is in his wheel house.

Belmont Park Race 6

Post Time 1:22 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

A case can be made for many in this race as there is no real standout or value of the more "logical" types in the field: **#1 PORTOS** is upgraded off his form and with today's marathon distance. He has not shown any stamina limitation with class (and placement) being his biggest hurdle in seeking out that third career win. He ran in this stakes race last year recording a solid 97 OptixFIG, a number on the lower end of the OFR that day though with today's OFR lower than last year (softer group) PORTOS moves up here.

Belmont Park Race 7

Post Time 2:02 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 SEARCH RESULTS might not be the “best” horse In this race though could be “best” suited to today’s conditions and race shape. She returns to Belmont Park and the extended one-turn route which has been successful for her throughout her career and likely intended for this race as she makes her second start of the season. Her running style can also be upgraded in today’s race shape. She has enough tactical speed to sit off #5 PLAYED HARD and look for that first run on the prime threat of #4 SECRET OATH and #6 CLAIRIERE.

Belmont Park Race 8

Post Time 2:42 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#12 GILMORE was given a “longshot” look in the Pat Day Mile (G2) and ran a solid race all things considered. That trip along with the buried, progressive form that gave him a look last month keeps him right back in the mix at double digit odds once again. His trip should be similar to that of ***#4 GENERAL JIM***, one that worked the right trip despite some ground loss and holding his form fits right back again against many he faced last month. ***#8 FORT BRAGG*** was collared late by General Jim, though still given credit for the wide trip closer to the pace and staying on late.

It is tough to split many of the runners that project to be on or near the lead, the number on the board could be that separator and see ***#11 VICTORY FORMATION*** stick at double digit odds. The placement and return to one-turn is in his favor, though all around must prove himself on class – the value compensation required.

#5 ARMAN is too strange of an entrant to this field to be ignored. Going back to his debut, he showed a lot of talent breaking his maiden first out in a full field, from the outside post, going 5f at Churchill Downs. He suffered some setbacks, odd placement, and trips in the two starts that followed and closed out the juvenile campaign. He raced himself into condition this year at Oaklawn Park and showed improvement from last year. He has kept up training out in California for Miller and the barn sends him out on this long trip across the country to run in this race and will be the only runner for this barn represented here this weekend.

Belmont Park Race 9

Post Time 3:19 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 DR. ZEMPF is upgraded exiting the productive Makers’ Mile (G1) and especially with the preferred cut back in distance.

Powell does not ship many horses though makes sense to ship out **#3 AIR FORCE RED** with his current form, early speed and for today’s 6f distance. He will be class tested here though he has turned in competitive efforts in the prior graded stakes races. His early speed and post position will make things more contentious for #12 CARAVEL, listed as the morning line favorite and falling into a tough spot with the complexion of today’s field and 6f distance.

#2 GO BEARS GO has more early speed than he has been able to show in his three stateside races. Some of that was due to rider tactics and the prerace excuse in the Breeders’ Cup last year. Another rider change will be in play with Jose Ortiz picking up the mount and would not be surprised to see them show early speed from the inside today. As a lightly raced four-year-old he brings more upside than stablemate #8 ARREST ME RED - one that finished second in this event last year, though tends to run the same race each time and his form coming back this year has not been as strong as in years past to keep in mind with post time odds.

Tough to ignore #10 BIG INVASION also returning from the Turf Sprint (G2) last month at Churchill Downs and the clear excuse with the trouble on the day. As he was favored and that trip very obvious to the public, he will likely find a lot of public support coming back in this spot. As far as trip #11 CASE CREED found an ideal inside stalking trip taking over from tiring rivals late to win the 2022 Jaipur (G1) and will look to defend that title. The trip must be considered as he is drawn outside today with the off-the-pace run style and additionally will give up recency returning from another layoff. By contrast, the trip will also be key for ***#13 FRONT RUN THE FED***, though as one that projects to be one of the longer priced horses in the race there is that compensation in play. As far as form, he has yet to pick up a graded stakes win, though has run competitive races against stakes company and kept in the mix at the number.

Belmont Park Race 10

Post Time 4:04 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 CODY'S WISH is a legitimately good race horse and a legit player in this race. His class, speed and running style fit today's race shape. The rail draw could be a talking point, though is just that as this horse has never run from the rail to say he cannot handle the draw and the two fines he has drawn post 2, both times one turn miles, he recorded wins and some of his stronger speed figures. Looking at OptixPLOT, **#6 ZANDON** sits in a similar position and shape and with the price discrepancy between the two is upgraded on that alone.

Belmont Park Race 11

Post Time 4:54 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The Appleby trained pair of ***#3 WARREN POINT*** (might have needed a local start in the Man O War (G1) as he was guided in with a blanket and blindfold and has worked three times with a pair of bullets since) and ***#4 OTTOMAN FLEET*** picking up Buick might be the class of the field for the live barn. With that said, both still require a top effort today to win.

Of the "local" runners, **#10 HIGHEST HONORS** fits on class, speed, and form right in line with his rivals. He has been winless in graded stakes company though has had some excuses, tougher post positions and still recorded competitive efforts. His form is buried with that lack of "1" and that includes his career high figure earned at Belmont last July. The distance has not been an issue running longer though he could appreciate the 10f a distance he has not run at since his sophomore year in the Belmont Stakes (G1) against the bias on the main track.

Belmont Park Race 12

Post Time 6:02 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The Belmont Stakes (G1) comes up this year very light and soft on class for the group as a whole. The edge on class sides with ***#4 NATIONAL TREASURE*** and ***#6 FORTE*** as the "most likely" in the group. Both still hold question marks in terms of confidence of play though have the edge over the other "logical" runners; ***#2 TAPIT TRICE***, one that moves up on distance though value the main knock as he has the tendency to create his own issues and #8 ANGEL OF EMPIRE, another that lacks value and seemed peaked heading into the Derby where he had a favorable race flow and still came up short. Cox will add the blinkers for this race, a move at the timing also creates further current form concerns.

The value of the field sits with **#1 TAPIT SHOES** as a runner that will make his graded stakes debut though finished alongside, #9 RED ROUTE ONE a rival has been graded stakes tested, in the Bath House Row stakes, a $200k event. As far as form, he has been consistent and number wise shown improvement with those figures sitting in line with #3 ARCANGELO and stablemate #7 HIT SHOW and above #5 IL MIRACOLO.