Handicapping Analysis
Wed June 21st, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The key in this race is finding an alternative to #5 MIZZEN ASH as she projects to be a shorter price in this race for the connections and coming off the win. She is capable; however she does not hold a strong edge over many of her rivals and in terms of pace could require a trip (Quad IV Square) from off the pace to win. There are others in this field with form for today's conditions and that form "buried" off their recent running lines and finishing positions.

#1 SHE'S WANDAFUL is upgraded with the key changes making her second start back off the layoff (PREP) and added ground (STRETCH) from the sprint two weeks ago. She does not "standout" on the Plot, though that "buried" form playing a role in today's position and holding early speed (Quad I) could be an asset with the "Snowflake" Contention.

#4 EMBARRASSING will take a slight rise in class coming back in this spot and second off the layoff. She can be upgraded from the running line and finishing position with the BTL OptixNOTE and while this is a class rise today, her prior form and class comparison suggests that with a top effort she can compete here.

#3 WAY TOO SMARTE has had just limited opportunities to run on the TURF though from a physical standpoint she appears suited to the surface. As far as those four turf starts, two resulted in wins here at Hawthorne including the Oakbrook Stakes last spring. She has run protected for Pompell since added to the barn and the decision to run for the tag today suggests they are looking to place here where she can compete. Rival #7 BEYOND PROPER also returns today to run for a tag and perhaps that can be less of a positive sign as drops for that first time coming back off the 201-day break.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 2:57 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

A case can be made for many in this compact field of five giving **#4 KRAMDEN** a look as he wheels back (along with #5 WHERE'D THE DAY GO) from the race last week. KRAMDEN has started to lose some conditioning as the main concern heading the June 14th race and the late interest and overall visuals were encouraging to see him show he is getting back on track. Bendezu will be back aboard today and has been aboard in the past including their most recent win here on December 2nd.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:24 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 COMING UP ACES will return to the TURF his preferred surface and a surface he has not had the chance to run race over much in the past year. Miller has kept up his conditioning on the main track and form running under similar par/OFR events in against open company around two turns. The shift back to statebred company and Santiago can also be seen as a positive as well as the change to run back on Lasix today to suggest further intent.

#4 JUST BLAZE seems "obvious" in this race for the connections and coming off the recent place finish. This will be his return to the statebred level for the first time since his three-year-old season though has run on this circuit since, doing so at the claiming level. JUST BLAZE is on the smaller side and makes sense that the connections have kept him sprinting for most of his career – the 7.5f two-turn distance is not his ideal, though with a top effort and with the right group is capable, though that should be factored as the shorter price is expected.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:51 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The early pace expects to be contentious (Sun) and three of those pacesetters (#1 I DON'T KNOW MARGO, #2 FREE LOVE and #6 KITTY MACLEAN) all showing a lack of finish (Circles) can upgrade the others in the field with finishing (Square) ability.

#5 MISS MELODY the first to upgrade as the other EP runner in this field and while she is not in Quad I can take up that role if asked or at the least, sit close enough to take first run. In terms of speed, she has run some of the faster speed figures in this field, another reason to upgrade in this spot.

The Large Square of ***#4 BEG BORROW N STEAL*** is tougher to ignore and could upgrade her more in this field than how she looks on paper. ***#3 PALACE MAGIC*** is another that could move up into contention in today's race shape. Her form does not tower over others, though is right in line with many in this field. Banks claimed her back on May 18th and protected here against allowance company on June 1st just to get a start and keep up conditioning and the class DROP appears the right move here.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The shift to the TURF and DROP to the maiden claiming level for **#2 SECRET OPERATION** looked to be the right move on May 25th. She encountered TROUBLE and the trip impacted her outcome on the day. Trip will be key here especially as Hughes will be back aboard though should see price compensation given the running lines and finishing positions from how she appears "on paper."

#9 FREEDOM ATTACK also could fly under the radar in this race. She will make her first start for the claiming tag, the right move at this point and also the first start on the turf. From her visuals going back to last summer she presented as a runner that could handle the turf and while it is often a mistake to compare off-track efforts to the turf (completely different animals) one of her more competitive races was over the sloppy track here in March.

Those two should offer value (and will still require a top effort) with ***#7 BE MY BESTIE*** for Rivelli and ***#6 GO ON GIRL*** (former Rivelli – in capable hands now with Hugo Rodriguez) in the field as a pair that have recorded some of the higher speed figures in the group. As far as BE MY BESTIE as she projects to be favored once again, despite the outside draw on May 25th, Centeno was able to establish position and create a near perfect, pocket trip for her and was just out gamed by the winner, though noting that those two were clear of the rest. Be My Bestie will likely look for a similar trip and to track off the pacesetters to which GO ON GIRL expects to be one of those front running types to try and catch.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 4:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Despite the "Fire" Contention (more than half of the field in Quad I) there is still a lower SpeedRate, the entire field below the ParLine, to upgrade **#6 TWO WORLDS** as the lone Quad I Square. That pace advantage could be key along with some separation as ***#7 TRY TRY AGAIN*** and #4 SHACKLEFORD STRONG should take up a stalking trip and look for first run on any tiring rivals from the early Contention.

#3 ANDREW THE GIANT is much deeper in Quad IV and trip will be crucial in addition to pace not allowing this horse to get too detached from the group in order to compete. His form should have him flying under the radar in this race, buried in the recent running lines, though is in the right spot of his form cycle with intent coming from the class/surface and distance changes to compete in this race.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:12 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 LEA RO is upgraded from the group returning from the June 1st common race. She should be able to hold her form coming back in the second start off the layoff and from a subtle trip (TRAFFIC, TROUBLE) keeping her further off the pace early. She should be able to find a more favorable trip today given the complexion of this field and flight addition of ground. #2 JOURNEYIST also returns from the June 1st race though must improve as well as show a bit more stamina noting the PERFECT trip with the place result; while ***#6 KINGSBURY DREAM*** can be upgraded making a WIDE MOVE and capable of taking a step forward in her second start off the layoff. #7 AALIYAH EZRI did not run on June 1st though was intended for that race unable to draw in off the AE. Number wise she fits with this group, though like Journeyist is another that will be tested for stamina.

The biggest threat in this race could appear from the “new face” in **#5 I OWE UNCLE MO** as she makes just her second start coming off the debut maiden win. She made a positive physical appearance in the paddock and on the track even suggesting she should handle any surface and the ROUTER of ground.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 5:39 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The finale is a real “horse race” with the presence of #3 MOMENT and #7 GUN RUSH in this race. Both horses come into this race off a series of wins and share a similar RunStyle where both project to be going at each other on the lead right from the start. Those two should be kept honest with #8 BOUBON DELIGHT in the field and even #5 COMFORT ME NOW (above the ParLine) playing a role in today’s SpeedRate.

#2 DRIVEN ONE could also be involved early (Quad I) with back numbers and class that make him competitive on his best day and despite the COLD barn, he has been able to hold his form (B- OptixGRADE) in his races here this season and could land himself the win in the right time and place.

The Contention can also upgrade **#6 PINEDALE** as well as his current form earning a B- OptixGRADE under similar conditions on June 1st. The trip and rider TACTIC- were not ideal and that is noted as Cristel comes back for this race making a change with Giles taking over. **#4 JEFF THE LION** requires returning to a top effort, though also has form from his races this season and back class with a win under similar conditions here back in 2021, just before his long layoff.