Handicapping Analysis
Fri July 28th, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Del Mar Race 1

Post Time 6:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 CAPTAIN SPARROW and #12 SEAL TEAM make a belated second start returning from the same MWS race here last November. Going into the race, CAPTAIN was preferred of the two and setting the pace assisted SEAL TEAM with the late run.

There appears to be plenty of pace in this race and that scenario could assist #7 NEON LIGHTS one that recorded a B OptixGRADE with the TRAFFIC CLOSE back on May 13th and encouraging with Pereira back aboard, a rider that has been live for Knapp.

#2 GRANITIANSEVENSIX is given a major class test on this circuit though off the debut visuals he has more to show. He showed a sneaky close and overall visuals for a horse that could adapt to turf and even show more early speed.

O'Neill has been sending out live and that trend upgraded #9 PLAYER B making their debut in this spot and with Fresu aboard, a rider that has been up with success for this outfit this meet. The barn also shows up with four-year-old #3 MIDNIGHT FURY (same owner) one that will step up in class and must improve overall and on the turf for the first time.

Del Mar Race 2

Post Time 6:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 SAKURA BLOSSOM could have been using the debut last month at HS Indy for a "prep" given the connections and shipping in "bonus" eligible. It is tough to take much out of her debut given the TROUBLE_S early and overall placement going around two turns on the turf. She looks to have come out of the race well and holds a local work from July 23rd.

Similar intention could be in play for #7 DESERT RHAPSODY shipping into Del Mar with the bonus in play making her debut three weeks ago at Ellis Park. The track profile favoring horses forwardly placed and was the outcome with the top two forward placed throughout and finished together and clear at the wire. DESERT RHAPSODY broke SLOG chased WIDE showed some run in spots and visuals to suggest she might be better on the turf. Similar going back to her work at the April sale still green and on the left lead clocking 10 flat.

#1 UNION HEIRESS has a long published work tag coming into this race and could be some intent for the connections to wait and debut during this meet. The barn can pop with debut runners and here during the summer meet and can often get overlooked, as likely the case here with the other named trainers in the race.

#8 TAMBO finds a lateral move with the circuit switch from the MSW debut three weeks ago at LRC. She finished second, recorded a solid number though as far as her visuals she was flashing her tail in response to the stick, something not shown in the running line and finishing position.

Mendez is known primarily for the juvenile runners and getting them ready with the barn sending out a pair in this race. #4 CARALOVA comes into make her debut and without getting visuals on her tough to assess, though with Maldonado aboard one could expect for early speed right out of the gate. As far as #6 SELDOVIA she showed run in both starts recording consistent figures that stack up generally for this type of race. The change in class is more of a lateral move exiting the statebred MSW races, though does come back from a layoff missing the entire month of June in the published works.

Miller also will send out a pair with #3 ASIAN MATRIARCH and #5 SUPER ENTICING both making their debut and watching them at the sale, visually nothing to knock especially with the placement in this type of maiden claiming race.

Del Mar Race 3

Post Time 7:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 SEVEN WONDERS is a good horse that is well overdue for a second career win. He has plenty of “BTL” races in spots where he finished off the board at this level to suggest he can compete here and just requires the right trip and improved racing luck. #4 COWBOY JUSTICE finds class relief from each of his three local starts and that change moves him up in this race. He might look “off form” looking at the running lines and finishing positions, though he has form and figures to fit on par with the others in this field.

#2 RIJEKA will receive a lot of attention in this race as he is proven at the distance and appears the “safer” option in this group. He has those back races though as far as assessing his current form he does not hold any strong edge over others. #3 KINGMEISTER is tested for class though should move up with the return to turf. The distance is also a question, though is a question for many in this field.

Del Mar Race 4

Post Time 7:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 WISHTHEYALLCOULDBE stands out in this group with the class change and running here for a tag. There can be some general concerns about the drop, though in this case the move looks well-timed and intended returning to Del Mar in this second start back off the layoff. Her form and figures here at Del Mar are efforts she looks capable of repeating here noting the rough start on her return last month.

Del Mar Race 5

Post Time 8:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This is a fairly evenly matched group and tough to give a strong edge to any in this field as the horse to beat. #11 GRANNY’S IPA moves up with the placement on the TURF physically he looks the part for grass and there was intention to debut on the turf keying off a 6/10 scratch. Smith started off the meet riding well, was aboard on debut and historically has picked up live calls for Cassidy. #5 PANTHERA’S FATE is another second time starter given a follow from his 6/10 debut (the race GRANNY’S IPA scratched from) with a rough go from start to finish. Part of the trip was due to rider TACTIC- and noted as a rider change comes into play today. Gonzalez lands back aboard #1 MAXVILLE, a lightly raced progressive type that raced X_FLOW on debut and also suffered from a less than ideal ride/TACTIC- and ground loss/WIDE on 6/10.

Del Mar Race 6

Post Time 8:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 CLIQUISH returns from a competitive B- OptixGRADE effort despite the 5th place result making an inside/SAVED MOVE against the track profile (X_BIAS) favoring horses forwardly placed on June 17th. She is upgraded coming back under similar conditions in this second start of the cycle and slight addition of ground. #6 PEQUENA TORMENTA also returns from that same event upgraded with the BTL run from making a WIDE MOVE to finish second.

#8 VITALERA looked to use that same 6/17 race as a local PREP for Polanco and first start back in about six months. She did not appear “meant” for the race though should benefit from the experience and fitness as she was asked to continue to run out a long way after the wire. With that said, she could still be a race out keying off her visuals (okay for turf/synth) and prior races at longer distances. The south American form upgrades **#10 PRACTICA CAT** racing in the graded stakes event and also one that turned in a BTL effort and projects to IMPROVE off her local return back at Gulfstream Park in May.

Baffert runners can often struggle to find the top form coming back as older off the layoff and will be the test for #5 HOME COOKING here. With that said, she can be given some forgiveness for the 6/16 return when not allowed to show (on hold – TACTIC-) her tactical speed after a SLOG and in a race shape/profile that favored horses forwardly placed and benefit her stablemate, Pleasant to finish second.

Del Mar Race 7

Post Time 9:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 UNBRIDLED MARY is legit. She is very good. She has sprint most of her career turf sprinting at slightly longer and perhaps was the reason the connections shipped to Lone Star to run in the June 24th stakes race, a race she was dominant (B+ OptixGRADE) in and had to be to overcome the SLOG, something that has been a habit for her.

#6 XMAS SURPRISE has some buried form here at Del Mar and races at the 5f distance. One of those races, a BTL place in this race last year, a race and many that followed with the poor TACTIC- from Pyfer. She will return off the three month break, a freshening she likely needed as she looked less than herself in the April stakes at Golden Gate Fields.

The pace should be honest given the complexion of this field and with #1 TWILIGHT GLEAMING in this field and drawing the rail. She has the edge of that front running group on class and speed, though in terms of pace she must be best overall to overcome that likely dynamic and some solid competition in this full field.

Del Mar Race 8

Post Time 9:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The public has caught up to the trend of Andy Mathis during this meet, especially with the younger runners and maidens, the barn already with a maiden juvenile winner this season noted with #7 SUNRISE MISCHIEF in this race. Quinn could sneaky under the radar, another barn stabled up at GGF returning with #6 THIRSTY THURSDAY from the debut back in April and one that should benefit from the seasoning and added ground for this race – and #4 IT AINT OVER making his debut.

Miller will sent out a pair in this race with both #1 MI CABO EXPRESS and #2 BALLYMUN coming in for a debut and might have at times worked together with similar times and dates training at San Luis Rey – the board and visuals could assist in trying to separate the pair.

#8 GENTLEMAN'S CLUB has shown some gate speed though a lack of lead change and also class is still questionable though makes sense to see him in for the tag. #10 SHINING TIGER makes a good physical appearance though ultimately might find his home on the turf. Similar could be said with grass for #3 ARTIST POINT as he shows up to make his debut here for Bonde though given a look as one that has started to move forward and could be well-meant here.