Handicapping Analysis
Sat August 12th, 2023

Stakes Spotlight

Colonial Downs Race 8

Post Time 4:14 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

RACE 8 - Secretariat Stakes (G2):

The pace projects to be contentious (Fire/63 SpeedRate) with the field staying intact. One of those from off the pace #7 MORE THAN LOOKS is cross entered in another stakes race at Saratoga (a rescheduled weather race from 8/4) and his RunStyle should not impact the early pace, should he defect, though could be upgraded with the race shape should they decide to run here. #1 SILVER KNOTT should benefit from the distance change exiting the 10f Belmont Derby (G1) and with a strong late kick/Square, is suited to today's dynamic.

#6 MAJOR DUDE could be overlooked coming off a fourth place run in the Manilla (G3), a race he could have regressed in keying off the trip and overcoming adversity to win in Penn Mile (G2) in June.

#3 NAGIRROC was an early scratch from the 8/4 Hall of Fame stakes at Saratoga, assuming the connections had this spot in mind instead. He will retain Prat for this race noting Prat had picked up another call in the Hall of Fame and could be another reason why they decided to wait for this race. The rider assignment is key as NAGIRROC could be part of that early pace and lacking a pace advantage, something he would require along with a top effort to win this race.

A lot of hype has surrounded #5 NORTHERN INVADER and likely to carry that steam into this race where shorter odds are projected on that alone. As an individual, he has done little wrong and took the step forward breaking his maiden on the turf last month at Belmont. While dominant picking up the win, the July 1st race was not the strongest field, and he faces a considerable class test here.

Colonial Downs Race 10

Post Time 5:40 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This is a competitive race and the type of event with many contenders to look outside the shorter priced runners (#4 ATONE) with value alternatives. **#9 ADHAMO** being one of those runners that could get overlooked returning from the layoff and some subpar efforts closing out 2022. As far as those races, he recorded one of the stronger numbers in the Sword Dancer (G1) and altered his RunStyle in the Turf Classic (G1) along with both of those races run at 12f, a distance further than his ideal. The 10f distance of today's race suits him perfectly and will reunite with Prat, a key rider for this horse as well – two elements (along with the purse) to suggest intent for this spot to make his seasonal debut. As far as his class, he is a G1 winner from the 2022 United Nations (G1) and showed he could compete at the G1 level with both solid efforts against the flow in the Turf Classic (G1) at CD and in the Manhattan (G1) with the traffic place finish. In terms of the layoff, he looks well prepared for the return following his works out in Saratoga to prepare for this race. He often gets WARM "washed out" that is who he is should those visuals come into play here on race day.

Del Mar Race 6

Post Time 6:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

RACE 6 – SORRENTO STAKES (G2)

This time of year, and especially with the field for this race, many are lightly raced, still developing, and still developing their preferred RunStyle. Many of the shorter distance races are won by horses forwardly placed and as they step up in class and distance that can start to change. #4 VINOS ANGEL looks to be one of those horses. She made the lead to break her maiden first out at Pleasanton on pure class alone. She was able to relax on the lead and picked up the pace on her own going clear to the wire. She will be class tested moving over to this circuit and in graded stakes company, though off that effort the connections are making the right move to find out how good she is.