Handicapping Analysis
Thu August 17th, 2023

Jim's Picks

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

2 Spicy Italian - 7/5 | 3 Pacific View - 3/1 | 1 Border Star - 6/1

An interesting spot here as 2-SPICY ITALIAN was intended for grass last out but almost pulled off the upset when staying in on the main track that day. Today the connections enter her for dirt as she finds a field where she should be forwardly placed and figures to contend the entire way. The question in the end will come down to price, as she looks to offer little value in here. 3-PACIFIC VIEW has tactical speed and has been knocking on the door, posting four runner-up efforts on the meet. She figures to settle mid-pack early but looks to move forwardly in the lane. 1-BORDER STAR could be the one to change the pace complexion from the inside. She stretches out after a pair of sprints to open her career and is bred to run all day. If she is able to make the top in here, she could have the potential to steal this race at a price.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 2:57 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

3 God Guns N Guts - 9/2 | 4 El Mucho - 3/1 | 2 J J's Solution - 9/5

Worth taking a shot to defeat the favorite in here as 3-GOD GUNS N GUTS makes his fourth career start. He got off to a later start as he didn't debut until his 4yo season but he ran a nice race against open-company in his second start out. A stumble at the start was costly last out but with the move to the turf, I expect he shows some speed in a race that doesn't have much pace. 4-EL MUCHO seemed to have matured a bit in his eight months away from the track as he posted a much improved effort in his first start of the season. He's another that figures to rate close as Centeno is back aboard once again. 2-J J'S SOLUTION has the speed figures in many races that would be enough to win in here. The problem is he's made 24 starts and still has yet to post a victory. When sprinting, he tends to settle back a bit early but should close with a rush in the stretch.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:24 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

6 Black Raven - 4/1 | 3 Merlotti - 9/5 | 4 Ice Axe - 7/2

Curious to see what 6-BLACK RAVEN shows us in this spot. He has run decent races in his first three career starts and is bred to run all day. With the stretch in distance, combined with a race with little early pace, look for him to possibly show speed and have a chance to never look back on the lead. 3-MERLOTTI has run solid races in all of his starts and his first career victory doesn't look to be too far away. 4-ICE AXE is another Perez runner that merits a look. He has run solid races in his four starts on the meet but just tends to close a bit too late. I expect her gets into the mix in here, but it may be for one of the positions underneath.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:51 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

6 Hot Cuppa Coffee - 5/2 | 3 Handsoffthegoods - 9/5 | 1 Cherry Orchard - 3/1

Really tough to figure what to do here as there's a pair of big class droppers that may be looking for a win and a claim. The biggest drop comes from 6-HOT CUPPA COFFEE as he showed little in his turf debut at Indy and now plunges to the bottom. The breeding is good, connections are solid and works are ok. Expect a much better performance in here. 3-HANDSOFFTHEGOODS also drops after a pair of turf tries to open his career. He split fields when in for the tag but just sort of raced evenly in both starts. He switches, surfaces, distances and drops as he is in the same boat as the top choice in here. 1-CHERRY ORCHARD has raced competitively at this level and figures to be a factor throughout. With the droppers in here, he may be overlooked at the windows but the consistency of his factors definitely put him in the mix.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:18 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

7 Another Mystery - 2/1 | 4 Sonny Smack - 7/2 | 5 Buck Moon - 6/1

A really solid field for the Thursday feature as numerous horses are in with a chance. The one with the most turf success is the favorite, 7-ANOTHER MYSTERY as he has a vast amount of graded stake success and figures to be very tough in this spot. He has been away since May but has raced with spacing between starts throughout his career. Expect him to close with a rush late. 4-SONNY SMACK is one that will close from even further back than Another Mystery as he tends to loaf along early and come charging in the lane. He comes off a near miss at Canterbury in his last and will just need some pace to chase in here. 5-BUCK MOON is fast and he is game. The only question for him to answer is how he will handle the turf. He battled in his last, only to be worn down by Notary (who draws the rail in here) late in the lane. If he can catch any sort of a breather in this spot, expect him to hang around to the wire.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 4:45 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

7 Sally's Suprise - 5/2 | 4 Visionista - 7/2 | 3 Crystal Snow - 9/5

The class relief should be welcome for 7-SALLY'S SUPRISE in this spot as she has faced tougher in her last couple. She did chase, and ran on for third at this level three back and comes in off a little breather since her last start. With some pace in this race, look for her to stalk early and run on in the lane. 4-VISIONISTA got the maiden breaker in a race that came off the turf two back. She chased the lone speed in that spot and was able to wear that one down late. With her tactical speed, she shouldn't be too far back in here but also doesn't need the lead to win. 3-CRYSTAL SNOW has speed and nearly stole one on the turf while stretching out in her last. She battled to the wire when at a similar level three back and will just need to avoid getting into an early pace battle with Heavenly Scent in here.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:12 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

6 Golden Bell - 9/5 | 1 My Lips Are Sealed - 7/2 | 7 Chrome Attack - 6/1

The key in here for me is that 6-GOLDEN BELL is not in for the tag as intent is everything. Brad Cox sends this one up from Indy for this race as she has speed but also has spaced out starts. The work pattern though is very consistent and picking up a good speed rider in Santiago will be beneficial as well. 1-MY LIPS ARE SEALED is more of the turf specialist but she has never gone this short in her career. She did rally late at 5 1/2 furlongs in her last but with the inside draw she will have to get a clean break and look to work her way through traffic in the lane. 7-CHROME ATTACK ran a big race while at this level last out. She was stepping up off an allowance victory into that spot and was overlooked a bit at the windows. She settled early but did show some late run to get into the mix.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 5:39 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

4 Off Ramp - 2/1 **7** Someone Said So - 8/1 **5** White Lies - 7/2

Trainer Coty Rosin has two in here and I'm hopeful he runs both as they have the potential to run 1-2 in this spot. 4-OFF RAMP was dominant at this level two starts back, winning by nearly nine lengths in the most impressive performance of her career. She held his own against stakes company in her last, closing later while racing wide. Look for her to get into the race earlier today and take over in the lane. I'm intrigued by 7-SOMEONE SAID SO as I truly hope she wasn't just entered to help make this race fill. She has ability but also comes off the lengthy layoff into here. What pops are the works, as she has posted recent bullet drills and is working consistently toward the return. Let's see if she runs, and if she does, she can compete at a price. 5-WHITE LIES was entered to go long last week but a vet scratch knocked her out of that spot. She's back in a sprint in here as she returns off the layoff. Expect her to sit back early and make one run in the lane.