Handicapping Analysis
Sun August 20th, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 HOT DAME showed a lot of GRIT to get the win two weeks ago at Belterra Park and will look to continue that win streak here. Running back to her recent efforts makes her a player, though she will still have to hold her form and could be peaked in her form cycle. In addition she should take pace pressure with #5 FREE LOVE in the field and even #1 JULIAISON could show more early speed on the stretch out with the rail draw.

#4 DIALED INNA was asked to show speed in her most recent start on July 12th, however that is not her preferred RunStyle. She should sit back and track the pacesetting pair with first run. Her main track “fast” races from earlier this season stack up with figures in today’s OFR and in line with the current numbers from HOT DAME.

In addition to HOT DAME, trainer Javier Hernandez will send out #3 PELLETIER one that has not run the higher figures as her stablemate though to her credit has shown progression as of late. Number wise she is not far off #2 LUCY’S LOOKIN LEFT, one that has limited route form and still must prove herself at the distance, while also looking to require a top effort.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 2:57 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Recognizing #2 MUD HUT sits as the horse to beat and one that could even present a pace advantage. While has been most competitive this season at today’s $6250k N2L level, she has come up short on the win end and visually left something to be desired in her more recent starts lacking finish.

Number wise, **#3 HIP HOP EMMY** has the ability to improve in that category returning from the layoff and building off the April figures. She showed run on debut after breaking slow (SLOG) and racing GREEN in what appears to be a PREP. She move forward in the April 30th second start staying on as the BOS setting a Very Fast pace both early and late. She was clear at the wire, though tiring as she was drifting out.

#5 SISTER SAINT is often her own worst enemy with the habit of breaking SLOG/TROUBLE_S and leaving herself too much to do late, as was the case as the favorite here on August 3rd. The added ground and experience over the course should assist, though another shorter number is projected as she has run some of the higher figures in this field.

#4 GYURZA has a chance to step up today and could be overlooked off the recent running lines. She is another that could see her race lost at the gate with a slower start, though did show some run earlier this year sprinting and will return to the one turn distance for the first time since April. *#7 HOLY IMAGE* is also worth a mention dropping to the lowest level of her career and should move her up as it did with the 4th place result here on July 6th, though overall is still lighter than some of today’s rivals as more of an underneath player.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:24 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

There are two big class droppers with #5 AVIANO and #6 HIGH BROW a move not uncommon towards the end of the meet. Of the two and in this event as a whole, HIGH BROW is likely to receive the bulk of the attention and while the drop could assist he has shown declining form as of late and that paired with a shorter price creates some reservations, especially with alternatives in the field.

As far as **AVIANO**, he was claimed for $7500 back in March to note with the class change here. In addition he was not given a chance to run after taking contact, TROUBLE_S at the break and eased up shortly after. It is encouraging to see the published work on August 9th from the gate after that race and even Reyes given the call, a potentially live call for a rider looking for a second win this season.

#7 FIRST MASAMUNE also finds class relief and given "first" preference in the selections. The class drop should be the right move for a horse looking for his first win this season. He has come up short and run competitive races only needing to excuse one race, the recent sprint on August 2nd when he broke SLOG and was not asked/NO_PUSH and will see Bendezu back in the saddle.

#1 CHRISTMAS PRESENT is another that has run some solid races this season and just come up short on the win end. His biggest challenge are the runners dropping in class, though expects to run his race and should find a similar trip to his most recent starts stalking behind the projects pacesetters, #4 BLOOMING GARDEN and also would not be surprised to see HIGH BROW show early speed here as well. #3 MEMPHIS PRAYER also should trip to find a similar trip with Esquivel taking over, though as shown in the OptixNOTES, is another runner that has the gate issues and SLOG pattern to consider with value.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:51 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

A game of two as three barns are represented by a pair of runners in this race. Rivelli will give Mojica the call aboard #6 PURPLE OCTOPUS suggesting intent as he was assigned aboard #4 NEON DEION when that one was a vet scratch on August 13th, a main track 5f Special Weight race. As far as the works, PURPLE OCTOPUS has started to improve the works as of late and with the return to training missing the month of May.

Perez has the outside pair of ***#7 BANANA PLAN*** and ***#8 DRAFTSMAN*** and both colts has a strong look in here and appear at least one is well-intended for this race. The two show limited and similar work tabs though a pattern not uncommon for this barn to knock off what is published on paper.

Block will also have #1 LUCKY ROMANCE and #5 TOUGH LITTLE NUT, two runners that are capable first out look well-prepared off the works and with live riders assigned both will require visuals in the paddock to upgrade/downgrade for this race and more specifically today's sprint conditions.

As far as the other two, the runners with experience: #2 ADIOS COOL ARROWS needed to show more in his debut to support with confidence and also one to follow on track as he was a late scratch here last Sunday nearing post time at 15-1. #3 KING OF THE PALACE also must show more off his PRM debut, though to his credit he had shown some run and through adversity and ground loss navigating around a loose horse.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Looking at the Plot, ***#1 CONSTITUTIONAL LAW*** should fall into a favorable stalking trip though looking through his OptixNOTES he has shown distance limitations and that is the prime concern here assessing as a top contender. Similar distance/stamina concerns for #5 CONI'S COUP one that could be a shorter number in this race and lacks an edge in that role, when looking at his Plot position compared to others and with today's race shape. The early pace should be Contentious (Sun) and honest (40 SpeedRate) with stretch out runners, #3 EASY FAST and #4 NULLARBOR joining more confirmed front running types, #6 BOONE'S PATH and #8 MINNESOTA MOON.

#9 PATH TO SUCCESS has struggle to get the win or earn that B OptixGRADE at the N1X allowance condition this season and noted with the DROP Keyword shown in the Past 3 Runlines. While he does return under similar allowance conditions today, today's OFR is lower than some of the events this season to suggest he can hold his form though still requires a lot in his favor to win.

Number wise **#2 STAR NATION** does not have those big figures that jump off the page, though has run races in line with today's competition. He has plenty of stamina on his side for today's distance and even form coming into this race. While more was expected from him on August 6th, he could have some excuse with the WIDE trip and racing against (X_FLOW) the dynamic – a race shape that was Very Slow early and late. His RunStyle and closing kick is similar to rivals PATH TO SUCCESS and #10 WESLAN and should be the higher odds of that group.

Number wise **#7 T LAW** is also softer than many of today's rivals, though to his credit he is a lightly raced three-year-old that has run well in each race to date. This will be his second start off the layoff and for Kirby and a lateral move as far as today's OFR identical to the July 30th race where T LAW showed run making a WIDE MOVE and the timing off (TACTIC-) and potentially intent with the rider change coming back today.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 4:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Looking at OptixPLOT, ***#5 TAPE TO TAPE*** appears to hold a pace advantage in this race and that edge over some of the other front running types shown in Quad I/III. He fits on his current form and coming off a solid, B OptixGRADE in the Work All Week stakes last month – good effort though just getting caught by ***#3 W W CANDY*** making his WIDE CLOSE and benefit from the race FLOW.

#1 CHIPOFFTHEOLDBLOCK also fits today's race shape sitting as a Quad II Square and has class and the highest 99 OptixFIG shown in the Past 3 Runlines to make him a main contender in this race. He has that positional speed and should have first run on W W CANDY as well as #4 NAVY SEAL.

With a similar Plot position, ***#6 BRESLAU*** will look for a similar trip, though one that must run back to a top effort to compete. Some intent could be in play showing up on this circuit for Contreras and with regular jockey, Esquivel along for the ride. #9 DEVIL'S TOWER has some back numbers that put him in the mix and holds upside from the TROUBLE trip and rough TROUBLE_S in the Work All Week stakes, though off the visuals and with a similar OFR, he could be better suited towards an underneath award today.

#2 SHARP HERO comes into this race with figures that fit on par and off the highest last out 94 OptixFIG. While that makes her a fit on numbers, class wise this is a step up and not sold the connections have this quality mare in the right race today in against the older horses.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:12 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Perez has been patient and determined to find a grass race for **#4 PIRATE MARMALADE** that today looks to be that day. He was scratched twice with races taken off the turf before accepting the surface switch making his debut last month. Stablemate #1 MANEUVER was also scheduled to debut on the turf and will have that surface switch today as well as some foundation on his side for this third start.

#7 OVERDUE HONOR also has been looking to get back to the turf and one that is more established on form and figures with some of the higher recorded numbers in this field. Those factors all around make him the more obvious type in this race though he has come up short at the shorter price, has the layoff lines and not much upside as a six-year-old gelding to create some reservations when picking holes in the favorite.

The long layoff was in play for ***#8 DARK SOLUTION*** coming back in June and has still not run back to his races prior to the break. Some excuses could be given for the main track starts and projected to move up on the turf (and was well backed) on August 10th, though noting his prerace antics (WASTED) he gave off signs that was not going to be his day and that carried into the trip as well with a potential excuse attached to the August 10th race.

#9 SCENIC JUSTICE has been the most competitive on the turf, though has come up short on the win when at shorter prices this season. Those races also run at HS Indy where he was able to race at the statebred level and finds a higher OFR shifting to this circuit. In addition, he has not shown much progression number wise and his figures this season pair up not stand out over others in this field that expect to be much longer odds. One of those is **#2 SMILING STORMY** keying off his debut number, that 63 in line with many in this field and can be given a pass for the TROUBLE_S and X_WIDE trip on the main track in June and has since scratched from two races taken off the turf in July. The 67 OptixFIG earned by ***#5 STROLLNTOTHEMARKET*** stacks up with others in here and from his visuals should take to the TURF as makes his first start here on the grass.