Handicapping Analysis
Thu August 24th, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 4:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Morning line favorite ***#2 BLUE NEITH*** appears well-intended here for the connections. She had legit early speed, numbers and class that stacks up at this level, though could end up finding more pace pressure than expected and pace being the main knock and potential hurdle.

#4 DOWNTON TABBY also looks to have some intent as she wheels back for the second start off the layoff and returning to her preferred route distance. Class wise this will be a lateral move (same OFR) as the August 3rd sprint race and a lower level than many of her races at Gulfstream Park. The one race with the similar 76-70 OFR as today's 77-71 was the dominant (B+ OptixGRADE) win back on December 30th and that race puts her right back in the mix today.

#5 SPIRITCATCHER wheels right back once again (the August 4th race on a 9-day turnaround) for this race and looking to pair wins in her Hawthorne debut today. She has run numbers that makes her a fit on her best day though returns that top effort as well as trip. The Belterra win was with the extreme (SPACED) dynamic as the front runner cleared early and SPIRITCATCHER under a strong ride moved into contention around the turn and finished in a drive taking over from that longtime leader late.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 5:15 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The lack of confirmed front runners moves #5 I DON'T KNOW MARGO into that role. She has been able to capitalize on that front end trip in the past, though did so against a softer statebred allowance group than the open here today. #4 RIBBONSINHERHAIR carried buried form that upgraded here on August 3rd and looks competitive right back under similar conditions. The race dynamic should over her closer to the pace than her running lines suggest and could sit right off MARGO with first run.

#6 STYLE is that confirmed late closer, a RunStyle that has played against her this season and presents another hurdle today with that being her primary knock. She fits at this class level on this circuit and has current form; trip the final frontier.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 5:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

: **#6 COMING UP ACES** comes into this race with some buried form and could be “coming up” in the right field, time, and place – and price which is key. He will return to the statebred allowance level and will find some subtle class relief off his recent races with the higher OFR. The pace and slight addition of ground could also be on his side for today’s race as the pace projects to be honest. COMING UP ACES does not have to fall into the deeper closer role he was in last out, noting the race shape with minimal change in running order and should be upgraded off that race here.

#8 TAHOE RUN is proven at this allowance level and distance with the surface being the unknown. He has been able to transfer his form from track-to-track and held his figures off the off-tracks this year at Oaklawn Park. His overall form could see him shorter than the morning line suggests.

#7 EMPTY HOLSTER returns to Hawthorne and the turf for the first time since October of last year. He will return to similar statebred allowance conditions from that even here though finds a softer OFR and his 74 OptixFIG earned that day is one consistent with his current form and fits today’s OFR and in with today’s field.

Morning line favorite, #5 COOL AND COLLECTED is proven over the turf though will make his first start against winners. He must also improve off his two races to date and that is still some concern as he showed mild progress from his debut to the uncontested LONE lead win (lacking lead change) and through a pace that was pace coded Slow early and Very Slow late. #2 MAN ON ATTACK has run similar figures in his two turf races this season though coming back today he projects to be a much shorter number than those races this year and value is questionable on a runner with hurdles on the win end.

#4 KINGBURY ATTACK also carries form and consistency over the turf this season, though class wise is more of a lateral change from the recent claiming races and must show more to win and also pace for his off-the-pace run.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 6:15 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The pace should be honest and the projected contention between #3 MARIA’S GIFT and #7 SHADOW BELLE could cancel each other out expected to battle early and joined by others in the field. Looking outside that pair for a contender, **#1 NO NANETTE NO** shifts back to the main track and class relief to move her up in this race. Her form this season, and even the main track form/OptixFIG this season stack up with today’s OFR. A rider change will be made today and could suggest intent with Felix taking over, a rider that has been riding well especially as of late. **#4 EMITYAAZ** also has run well this season and returning in this spot with class relief in the third start of the cycle, should have her competitive if there was ever a time and place to get back on track. She is further upgraded with today’s Surface/Distance race shape looking at OptixPLOT as a Large Square higher on the y-axis.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 6:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

There are two runners in there that stand out among the others: **#6 SAKE** ships into this circuit and the class change moves her up in a big way. She is upgraded on the Plot and from her running lines even coming back from the layoff. The Pimlico race was a competitive allowance on Preakness day with a full field, and from off the pace (SLOG, TROUBLE_S) SAKE showed run in spots though was unable to get into the race. **#1 I’M BOX OFFICE** has yet to run to the figures of SAKE, though has shown progress race-to-race and off the visuals she could still have that top effort in her and has not shown it yet. She was given a follow off her races last year and jumped up with the TWO_MOVES to break her maiden impressively (B+ OptixGRADE) here in June and showed run against winner on August 2nd making a MOVE through TRAFFIC earning a B- OptixGRADE behind the top two that finished together at the wire.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 7:15 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 MADELYN BELLE comes back today looking for a third straight win and even the debut visuals has her nearly perfect to start for Catalano. She showed a lot of class (and was well intended, backed by the public on the board and favored heavily in the will pays) getting up to win over the turf in July. She did have to work hard to get the win (B+ OptixGRADE) overcoming adversity and encouraging that she has been given some adequate recovery time, the 35-days for this race. She is tough to knock as an individual and should fit today's race shape shown as a Quad I Square – tracking right off Circle, #3 LOVEYOULIKECRAZY; and could even see #4 COMMISSIONER GULCH forwardly placed as well.

#2 JULYNNE is lighter number wise though could still present a move forward and as a Square on the Plot suggests she can compete against today's field. She showed a lot of class (B+ OptixGRADE) to break her maiden on debut, though a taxing effort (HARD) that required recovery time, recovery time she was not given and that impacted her in the races that followed. She showed progress coming back just over a week ago at Fan Duel and the connections must be encouraged enough off that effort to make the trip and quick turnaround here.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 7:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 FIRST HILL has first preference on the morning line and most likely to hit the wire first. She has foundation at the route distance on the turf and consistently recording some of the higher figures in this field. She will return here off a competitive effort sprinting at Ellis Park given the far outside post and WIDE trip that followed.

#2 APPLE EVER AFTER returns in this spot to make her second start off the layoff and shows intent repeating a form cycle pattern from last year. She improved second off from a number standpoint and projects to do the same here. She should move forward off the August 5th Colonial race, a race she needed and showed interest in from a visual standpoint.

Intent could also be in play for #6 BROADWAY CHARM as she shows up here first off the layoff and for trainer Brian Cook – a barn change that was made after the debut and had been training with Ken Sweezey off that claim down in Florida. As far as the debut effort, the show finish was BTL though in terms of class will be tested here with Special Weight company. The class change (rise) is also noted for #10 LEAPIN LEVA shipping in off the Mountaineer debut last month. As far as the effort she took a tough beat on the wrongside of the photo, a photo that going the other way she would not be in this race.

#7 SILVER EYES also remains with Special Weight company a level she has been overmatched (DROP) at this season, though has been looking to get on the grass (was even scheduled to debut over the turf here last June) all season and from a visual standpoint she should handle TURF. #3 GOLD OAK and #4 BONITA D'ORO have had their chances on the turf and proven on the surface though have not quite shown that "winning" race yet and class, like others here remains their big hurdle on the win end.