Handicapping Analysis
Wed August 30th, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#8 BLOOD MOON needed a more aggressive ride here on August 16th and that change in tactics should be in play today with Lezcano taking over and finding some class relief and slight distance change – further positives. In terms of the early pace, both #1 RIVER BOY and #6 POKER PLAY can show speed with the former coming off a top 13-days ago and the latter overall tougher to trust with other front runners in a race. That scenario of contention can assist **#7 FLYING SAMURAI** with a stalking trip, another finding class relief and a rider change to suggest intent in the final week of the meet. The rider change back to Giles aboard ***#3 NOT VERY GENTLE*** also suggests intent; while the two did not pick up a win earlier this meet their two starts together finished on the board and competitive under similar conditions to today's event.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 2:57 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#8 LAKE MILLS made a positive physical appearance (PRERACE+) on July 26th and showed run with adversity at the break (SLOG, TROUBLE_S) making a MOVE to finish third over a main track profile that was playing fast and tough to make up ground on. He fits today's conditions and in current form shown in Past 3 Runlines lacking "red" with OptixFIG in today's OFR.

The race shape looks to have Contention (Fire) though a lower 13 SpeedRate to assist horses with tactical speed. The race shape and class change can also benefit ***#1 ROGER MCQUEEN*** and ***#2 LUCKY SHOT*** both also in form (lack of "red" OptixFIG in OFR) and looking to find this spot as the right spot to compete.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:24 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Looking at OptixPLOT the "Red" PlotFit suggests an unpredictable pace scenario. #2 SLAVA UKRAINI is the lone "E" though coded "Red" in the OptixRPM (RunStyleMatch) due to the Quad III position. #7 G T FIVE HUNDRED shifts to Quad 1 with the stretch out in distance though finishing ability (Circle) is the concern with today's added ground especially with the layoff lines, recent front wrap addition and class rise.

Class is the concern for former Mason runner #4 ICE BLAST though intention should be there as he makes his second start off the claim and returning to a route of ground on the one week turnaround. He should fall into the right trip, a trip that will be key with the two Large Squares of **#1 MILLARD'S SMILE** and #3 GLOBAL EMPIRE tracking right off of him and have the class edge on their side.

#5 COMING UP ACES had an "upset" look when he was entered last Thursday in a statebred allowance on the turf and lands here following that trainer scratch. He has some class on his side, numbers that stack up on his best day though still requires to run that top effort with price compensation required. #6 T LAW is interesting runner in this race as he shows up in this spot racing above condition. The placement might just be what is available and in form (with OptixFIG in line with others) the connections are willing to take their shot.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:51 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Throughout the meet we've seen many Block runners favored without much edge in the field and that could be the case in this event with #1 MONSTERONTHEMIDWAY. He fits in this race and coming back from a DQ from show three weeks ago earning a B- OptixGRADE. The rider change to a journeyman should assist on this horse that can be a handful at times. The value is still required as others in this field have run faster races and he still must show he can run faster if those others run their race.

#2 IZEONDEC is an interesting horse in this spot. The connections have tried to run as MTO and certainly would be okay if there were a surface switch this afternoon, though they also have shown run on the turf. One of those turf races was here back in May when compromised by the TACTIC- by Emigh and saw a quick rider change to Felix off that effort. His prior start, the local debut on April 13th was a sneaky good race and the type of TROUBLE trip that warranted an EX – EXCUSE.

#3 SHARP AZ NAILS physically presents as a runner that can handle turf, and despite being entered a couple times looking for the surface switch they look to find that grass debut today. Class wise he should fit at this claiming level noting he was handled by allowance company this season and benefitted from the PERFECT trip to break his maiden at the Special Weight level. That race was sprinting and following this runner, he does carry some distance limitations. The mile looks to be his max and requires the right level, trip, and pace to get the added ground. Hernandez taking over today projects to be assertive and likely to see this one on the lead right from the start.

Some distance limitations have also been observed on #6 LAWMAKER and part of the reason he has settled for minor finishing. He comes into this race in form for today's N2 claiming level. #5 IMPULSIVENESS will give up some recency returning from the 53-day freshening. He is one that has been knocking around at the N2 level for quite some time and while he has been consistently running his race he requires a lot in his favor to win – not out of it though price compensation is necessary.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This allowance race comes up light for the level and those races are tough to assess and can often come down to which horse gets the trip and in form over the "best" in the race. **#7 TWIRLING ROSES** could fall into that profile coming into this race on an "every other" pattern and some subtle trips this year, still looking for that first win. In terms of pace (Plot) he does not have any edge over others and shows up with a similar position to #4 CORTESE, the likely favorite and #8 RICHIESONAROLL, one that could appear "lone speed" on paper. As noted the "tricky" complexion of this race, this is not a race that really upgrades/downgrades any horse in particular.

Runners from off the pace: ***#2 STAR NATION*** Is upgraded on OptixFIG and class over #5 DASH TO THE CASH, a pair of runners that should land in a similar trip – Quad IV Squares. #3 POWER ALLEY could get attention off the connections and presence of Loveberry, though as an individual still has something to prove and IMPROVE to compete for a top spot in this race.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 4:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Projected favorite, #1 SIMPLE LOGIC has benefit from favorable trips this year and while he could fall into another one today looking at OptixPLOT, coming up short with the PERFECT trip last out creates reservations at a short price and reasons to get creative with others looking for value.

#7 MCMONEY could appear a logical alternative with the recent win and coming off a show finish in his most recent start and where Hernandez lands noting he had been aboard some others in this race in their most recent start. He did have a favorable POCKET ground saving trip and lacked excuse under similar conditions earlier this season as one that might lack value. **#5 DANCE SOME MO** should find himself in the right spot to compete and some intent as he makes his second start of this form cycle and looking to pick up the first win for these connections since taking over.

As far as the previous “Hernandez” runners: #6 ARMAVIR comes into this race lighter than others, though has shown progress with each start this year and especially in his current form cycle. He projected to move up with racing and added ground and has done just that, he will be out to show he can take that further step forward needed to compete against today’s group today. #8 BAKENEKO has struggled at the N1X allowance level this season, though going back through his form, he has run races that would make him competitive, even his race here on the turf on May 21st earned an 81 OptixFIG, a number in today’s OFR and one that is in line with the other “logical” in the race. Class and trip is key for #4 SON OF GRACE, though with the “bunched” Plot visual he could benefit with his RunStyle and at the least come running late to pick up pieces.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:12 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 SONNYISNOTSOFUNNY looked to benefit from the class drop on August 13th though the SLOG and race dynamic (despite fast pace early and late there was minimal change in running order) were factors he was unable to overcome. Some intent should be in play as they come right back today and come back with a rider change to Centeno, the rider aboard for the place finish on June 7th and has not been up since.

#5 BORN AGAIN GEORGE also returns from the August 13th race and upgraded from that event as he lands here in the second start of the form cycle (looked short off the 39-day break) and intent with Felix back aboard. The Plot position suggests he will race closer to the pace and should land in the right trip as a Quad I Square. #2 RISKY BOY comes back from that same common race, though one that is a more “common” type this season consistent with the C+/B- OptixGRADE races – tougher to support on the win end.

#4 Z U SOON was well-intended backed in the will pays and opened with early money here on July 26th and was less “meant” wheeling back in 11-days on August 6th, his most recent start. He is one that tends to run that “every other” race and benefit from more time between starts, the pattern here. Reyes, the win rider from earlier this season will also jump back aboard and could suggest intent today as well. The class DROP should benefit ***#8 PERFECT WAGER*** again wheeling right back in a week. Pace/trip is key as he makes that run from off the pace, Quad IV Square, though should be back in the right spot here and with an improved run from just 7-days ago.