Handicapping Analysis
Sun September 3rd, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Rednour will send out a pair in this race with the more logical, established #7 J J'S SOLUTION leading off the duo. As noted he is more established overall and stacks up with the others racing here this season and could just find the right group in the final days of the meet to belatedly clear the maiden condition. Trip/Pace must still be considered sprinting as he has shown himself to CLOSE in his sprint races and that trip does require racing luck to win – something to consider in addition to his overall race record at the projected shorter number. Stablemate #1 JAKES CHANNEL takes some creativity to get to though for this horse, the intention has been to race on the turf all year. He has just the lone grass race back on June 29th (a few other off the turf races not all showing up in the form) when setting a faster pace for the mile distance and also racing off the layoff and in open company. There is some reason to suggest he has not shown his best yet.

#4 TEMPLE FOOL makes the circuit and surface switch for this third start. He has shown some run and improvement race to race. He returns from a 36-day freshening for this race coming back from the July 29th FanDuel race in the slop, a racetrack with standing water and had issues at the start (TROUBLE_S – possible saddle slipped) before running (CLOSE) on late.

Looking at OptixPLOT, #5 SMOOTH ATTACK could hold a pace advantage as a Quad I Square (stalked by #8 FLYING CRICKET) though class has been the hurdle for both runners and something to consider here when assessing value.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 2:57 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#7 CAIRO SUMMER has the chance to pop up in this spot with some upside given the Plot position in Quad I as a potential pace advantage. That edge is paired with the OptixNOTE from August 10th with the PREP designation as she set the pace (FTQ) and stalked by her more fancied stablemate winner, Timeless Glory.

Of the closers/Quad IV, ***#5 IOYA AGAIN*** has the slight class edge over #3 MEMPHIS PRAYER and #4 AVIANO making his first start at today's restricted claiming condition. In addition, he comes back from a competitive race, B- OptixGRADE, 72 OptixFIG and BTL effort on August 9th. The surface switch will be in play and while this one does prefer the turf, his limited starts on the main track hold OptixFIG that stack up with today's group and OFR/race par.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:24 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 IN OPEN COURT is upgraded with the circuit switch and from the subtle trip (TRAFFIC, SHUFFLE) on August 3rd at Colonial Downs. She showed run in that race though not quite to the top level of her competition (DROP) and should move up in today's field. As far as the circuit switch, the change should also benefit #6 DEE DEE B, one that has recorded some of the higher figures in this field and that should move her up naturally here – also likely to be favored on that alone and must show more (visually) to win.

As far as the local group, #8 TEXAS PRINCESS turned in a solid B- OptixGRADE effort with the poor start (pattern of gate/SLOG issues) and handling (TROUBLE_S, TACTIC-) that created TROUBLE from the inside/SAVED trip and second best of the stretch duel with winner, Sangfroid. Going back to July 23rd, **#2 QUICK AND DIRTY** was given a look at a price and that carries over to this race. She has recorded some competitive figures from the runners in the field and those races over the turf. The connections have been looking to get her to the turf not only for the race last month but three times prior with races take off the turf at Mountaineer.

#4 LIMANI is also a "new face" as she makes her local debut in this spot. This race was not the initial plan as she was entered in a MSW 5.5f sprint on August 13th and as a Vet Scratch that day, they are taking this race with the added ground and claiming tag by default.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:51 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

A lot of attention fell on **#4 ROCK TO FAME** when he debuted two weeks ago at Ellis Park bet down to 4-1 from a 15-1 morning line. As far as coming up short, he made a RUSH into a DUEL, stalked as the race was slowing late by the winner, Alder, the race favorite for Brad Cox. DiVito wheels right back and with this circuit switch and projects intent once again and preferred of the runners with experience. **#3 MAXIMUM COLOR** looks very live and could be the biggest threat in this field. He has a steady work tab with some sneaky good works and the rider assignment to Esquivel is noted for a top rider picking up the mount for a barn he does not often ride for here.

#5 LAST MINUTE will fit his name as he makes his belated debut in the final days for the meet. Going back to April, he blitzed 9.4 and did it nicely laying his body down and changing leads on cue, not surprised off the move to bring the higher price tag. His works have been relatively steady as of late though some subtle gaps in the published series as a slight reservation.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Three of the runners with experience return from the August 13th common race, a race that had two DELAY with an early scratch of a runner nearing post time and after the horses went to the gate, a further pause as the heavy race favorite acted up in the gate and had to be scratched. #8 EXCITABLE BOY moved into the role of the race favorite by default and could take up that role again off the common race, figures, and place finish. The surface/circuit change is in play for #5 METRONOME as he makes his second start and should find drier conditions than the downpour (WEATHER) he raced in on debut at Presque Isle. #6 NEON DEION will also find the surface switch, though there was some intention to race on the dirt as he was an early Vet Scratch from that August 13th common race. He has some fitness on his side wheeling back from the WIDE trip two weeks ago, though must step up overall to win here.

Assessing the first time starters: ***#5 BAXLEY*** cooked 10f flat (wearing blinkers) at the OBS Sale back in April and expects to show speed here with Felix aboard. Visually off the breeze, he looks on the "turfy" side and overall could be some concern why it has taken this long to make a first start, especially with the longer, steady work tab. #3 KING ANTHONY really had to be put to a drive to clock the 10.3 time back in March and while he works looks more upbeat on paper (some gaps in works), he will have to show more speed to compete with this sprint distance. The works on paper are often not going to stand out with the Manny Perez runners and often look similar to the pattern of ***#4 MATRIX CODE*** first out. The barn has struggled with first time starters on the win end, and many have the pattern of breaking slow, though worth getting a look at this one in the paddock and prerace as these horses are all individuals and the right horse can overcome stats. The visual assessment carries to the other first time starters, #9 BERABERABERA and #10 QUEBRANCHO, another two for outfits that are not necessarily known for first time starters.

Hawthorne Race 6 - PLAY OF THE DAY

Post Time 4:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Looking at OptixPLOT, the “Fire” Contention and higher 75 SpeedRate looks to set up runners from off the pace. That scenario could assist morning line (and projected) favorite, #2 COMMAND POINT but again looking at the Plot there are runners in a similar position with Larger Squares and longer odds to upgrade for the upset. ***#7* MIZZEN ASH** upgraded with the Plot and coming back from the August 23rd race, a sprint event that did her no favors overall and projects to move up with STRETCH and from the GALLOP+ visuals 11-days ago. ***#3 BLOODY MARY MORNIN*** also looks to move with the added ground, positive surface switch (dirt NO_HANDLE) and race under her belt (PREP) coming back from the layoff on August 3rd.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:12 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 STORMY EMPIRE is tough to get to looking at the Plot, though going through her races to date and this season, this could be the right time and place for her to get the first win of 2023. This will be her second start off the two month layoff and projects to improve with that PREP race under her belt. Class wise she will find a further change and could hold a class edge over some of today’s rivals as she has been racing against much tougher and for the higher purse structure. Looking at the Plot, ***#7 FIRST KITTEN*** is tough to ignore as the Large Square above the ParLine, stalking right off the Quad I/III Circles (#1 SAMARITA, #2 MISS WINDY SLEW and #3 PRINCESS STELLA) drawn on the inside and looking to get first run on the Quad III/IV Squares (#4 LONG TALL WOMAN, #5 SEAWARD and #8 CHAMPAGNE AFFAIR) to work the right trip. Some concern in form cycle as she is coming off the win and top 87 OptixFIG on August 17th and must hold form here to run to that Plot position and shape. Form cycle also comes into play for #1 SAMARITA as she comes into this race on a win streak and with some “red” in the Past 3 Runlines/OptixNOTES including the REGRESS on August 3rd. Trip also must be considered for her from the rail as she does not have many trip options with her RunStyle and that post.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 5:39 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 FOLLOW THE SIGNS could get lost on the board in this full field and intent for this race following a scratch from a similar type of event on August 23rd, the day when higher heats shifted to a later post time and allowed the Trainer Scratch. Following his season, the connections have been waiting to return to the turf and finally finding a grass race last month, they had to run higher than ideal against allowance company. The DROP should move him forward and even carries upside from the legit EX – EXCUSE with TROUBLE+ on July 16th.

Both #8 EXPROMPT and #9 DRAGON DREW stayed in on August 23rd with the smaller field, the two finishing 1-2 and should hold their form here to get back in the mix. #10 AZREAL was another Trainer Scratch from that common race and one that could add more early pace to the race. He has versatility as far as his RunStyle, though the outside post could dictate him showing early foot to get into the race, especially with a clean break – something he did not have in his July return races this year as shown in the Past 3 Runlines.

Morning line favorite, #6 LYRICAL POET makes the big circuit and class drop to run in this race. His early speed paired with the weight break should be to his advantage from a pace standpoint, something he will need and must prove best if he has to deal with today’s “Fire” Contention honest 32 SpeedRate to win. He is certainly capable of winning this race, though does appear this one is in to get claimed the connections willing to move on from this horse as the primary intent here.