Handicapping Analysis
Thu November 2nd, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Churchill Downs Race 3

Post Time 1:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Machado will look to improve with the handling back aboard #1 EL FRANCO coming off the 10/8 Keeneland trip. In that race, some excuse could be made given the TACTIC- held up inside, stuck X_FLOW while in TRAFFIC and unable to run their race.

Churchill Downs Race 8

Post Time 3:33 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Godolphin has two runners in here coming off long layoffs for different trainers: #9 BANISHING is preferred for Walsh. He showed class in his debut from the outside post and built off that wide trip with a dominant (B+ OptixGRADE and 96 OptixFIG) maiden wins on 12/26. He had trouble at the start and might have played a role in the February allowance effort and the layoff that followed. #4 HIGGINSON broke his maiden last summer on debut as the favorite (and with the race flow) and saw his three year old season cut short with a no-show in his second and most recent start. This now four-year-old makes a belated return and first start as a gelding.

Churchill Downs Race 9

Post Time 4:05 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Can make a case for #7 PLAY ACTION PASS though requires more than the 3-1 morning line. 5-1 seems fair odds given the current form, current form that can also be a slight edge over some others in here returning from layoffs. #1 EL ORIENTE is one of those layoff runners and one that is also unproven on the turf. As far as his races on this circuit earlier this year both earned B- OptixGRADE and even if this is not the time and place to win, sticking around for a share is possible.

Santa Anita Race 1

Post Time 3:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#10 ZE'BUL had a consideration at this level over the dirt last month. The TACTIC- (rider change today), trip (WIDE MOVE) and SLOG played against him more than the surface racing on the dirt. The big upgrade last month was the class drop that was required from the higher level stales and allowance races and fits under today's conditions.

Santa Anita Race 3

Post Time 4:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#9 EL REY REY had one of those "obvious" trips in his debut following a SLOG with legit TROUBLE+ showing a huge late kick (CLOSE) and continued to GALLOP+ past the wire. Sadler/Rosario was a potent team on this circuit years ago and reunite with #1 ISLAND CRUISER for his debut. Watching him train class is tough to tell on the main track as he does present very "turfy" the surface of today's race. #2 SKETCHY also carries himself for the grass and a classy look at the same time. He has had some rough goes out of the gate, lunging out of the stall on 10/26 though a good move that followed - a 6f drill with a sneaky middle quarter.

Santa Anita Race 5

Post Time 5:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 AVENUE will give up some recency returning from a layoff and preferred of the returning McCarthy pair. AVENUE has shown class and stamina. His RunStyle should suit today's race shape and some intent with J. Velazquez aboard. He has also run well fresh form McCarthy, even when not securing the win.

Santa Anita Race 6

Post Time 5:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The right move with the class drop is being made for many in this field that have been overmatched against Special Weight company. #5 PETITE ANGE moved up on the class drop for her second start at DMR closing weekend. The BTL effort was noted as well as the VSLOG a pattern from debut. A slow start should be expected here and will require an assertive hand under Pereira as well as some value to play.