Handicapping Analysis
Sat December 2nd, 2023

Stakes Spotlight

Aqueduct Race 7

Post Time 1:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Deserving favorite #3 LIFE TALK has been consistent race to race recording figures and holding her own in G1 company. The class drop should assist with the main concern is holding her form for one more start and off, what in modern terms has been a full season campaign.

#4 MOST OF ALL is the up and comer in this race and as she has taken a step forward in each start that progression can continue here. She debuted in a STRONG MSW event at SAR with a subtle trip and showed some improvement wheeling right back in two weeks - a rush to get a start before the end of the meet. She was freshened for the return on 10/20 and dominated the group. That win is one that typically can be downgraded - MTO, compact field, off-track, open length win; however she did it the right way and built off the prior foundation. Physically the added ground should not be an issue here and the fitness and conditioning on her side should allow for a top effort, the test will be class, though that test carries to many others in this group without as much upside as this filly.

Aqueduct Race 8

Post Time 2:17 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

There are reason for and against the "logical" trio - #5 TIZZY IN THE SKY (7-2), #6 GERRYMANDER (5-2) and #7 GOOD SAM (5-2) in this race. Of the group, #7 GOOD SAM is preferred, and not because of her local record, that is lazy handicapping, but due to her class and progression with improving figures since the debut - a class B+ debut in her juvenile season. The outside draw should assist in terms of trip as there appears plenty of early speed in the race and outside under familiar rider, I. Ortiz, they can dictate their trip.

As far as knocks, value being the main as 5-2 on GOOD SAM is line and perhaps she will drift. Stablemate GERRYMANDER has run the "faster" races though has done so with favorable (Red Keyword) trips and the recent figure should be taken with a grain of salt as it was a match race against a NY-bred filly called Sunset Louise, that finished lengths behind rivals, #3 VENTI VALENTINE and #4 KNOW IT ALL AUDREY in the Empire Distaff - both at double digits can be considered as underneath use, and spread coverage taking a stance against some favorites.

Form cycle is the concern with TIZZY IN THE SKY as she ran a HARD race under 30-days ago and could have peaked in her form cycle off the two recent top efforts.

Value at 4-1 is the main knock on #2 DR B, the winner of this event last year when the race under WEATHER. She clearly has the races that make her a player though will make her first start off the two month break and not recording a work in October. The rider change also noted and not as much of a concern as Irad sticks with GOOD SAM and primary client, though should require some price compensation today to play; and the 4-1 isn't it.

#1 SADDLE UP JESSIE has improved with the barn and circuit switch and off the current form, the connections are right to take a swing at this level with nothing to lose. Number wise her recent LRL figures stack up to compete though the class rise is significant and form from LRL does not always (more often not) transfer to NYRA.

Aqueduct Race 9

Post Time 2:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 DORNOCH is likely to be favored here as it appears the public opinion was blown away from the maiden win (KEE 10/14); and visually, in my opinion was underwhelmed. Yes, he was able to clear by open lengths but was on the left lead and drifting (NO_LINE) sideways through the lane. The pacesetters of which he was one, finished 1-2 and that maiden race has yet to produce a winner or even much improvement from the runners in that field - take a short price, but buyer beware.

Typically this race does not get a lot of credit going into the Derby Trail though there could be some runners in this group (even horses not named Dornoch) to follow and use today where value should be there in the face of a a weaker favorite. #10 PRIVATE DESIRE could get overlooked off the recent running line and outside post. He ran a competitive race on debut and validated himself with a classy (B+) maiden win over this course in September. He returned fresh (perhaps with the Remsen (G2) in mind for the Nashua where he is upgraded after the SLOG making a WIDE MOVE into a slow early pace, the race dynamic with minimal change in running order suiting the pacesetters finishing 1-2 that includes 19.8-1 winner and today's rival, #8 WHERE'S CHRIS.

Aqueduct Race 10

Post Time 3:12 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Both #2 EVERSO MISCHIEVOUS and #10 ACCRETIVE fit with competitive G2 efforts, though looking at them in today's OptixPLOT, neither horse hold any strong edge in today's field. That should not be confused for the ridiculous statement "the Plot does not like" it is more a factor of value when assessing favorites and shorter priced runners.

Morning line favorite #3 SENOR BUSCADOR also checks the boxes on class, sped and form as he finds class relief to run here. He will also cut back in distance and has been effective at a mile. In terms of Surface/Distance, he is shown as a Q4 Square (Q2 above the ParLine Standard) and that also must be considered on value with a trip from a deeper closer.

On the topic of Plot, incapable of "liking" or "disliking" as someone in the role of a handicapper assessing the data, #11 HOIST THE GOLD has a "dislike" spot - QI/II above the ParLine should make a move, a contender type move into the turn and flatten (Circle) out in the stretch.
#7 THREE TECHNIQUE follows Hoist the Gold out of the BC Sprint (G1) and should appreciate the added/STRETCH ground. His Plot position is similar to #5 DR ARDITO and #6 HIGH OAK, two runners that have their own knocks, respectfully, though at the right price would have a hard time being too critical.

*this analysis is with the field pre-scratch and due to the complexion of the field as-is.