Handicapping Analysis
Sat December 9th, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Park Race 1

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#8 GREATHEART has been pointed to Oaklawn Park since his early maiden days and returns here form a third season. In prior meets, he has spent most of his time against allowance company outside of the $30k N2 level win last year and returns for that claiming tag and similar race par – a similar race par to the MTH win over the turf back in May. #2 W W CRAZY also has buried form at Oaklawn Park going back to the 2021, his sophomore season and first two starts in MSW company running competitively in both efforts despite finishing off the board. That is noted as the record will only appear 0-for-2 in the standard past performance and not take into account his older and current form that fits on class and speed for this race. #4 WHAT A COUNTRY also fits off his prior OP form for this level and numbers this year of par to compete. He will be ridden today by Erik Asmussen a rider starting off and so far still has a lot to prove and on that more than anything else moves this horse down in the selections and requires value.

Oaklawn Park Race 2

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

As noted on the Friday analysis, trainer Moquett came out firing early last year and as a trend to follow starting this meet. If that trend continues, #2 SUNDAY SPIRIT looks live on debut off the published worktab a steady series of drill with speed and stamina with primary rider, Bejarano aboard. #9 GOD'S COUNTRY has posted similar "bullet" works for their debut and in capable hands with the connections. Shifting to the outside #12 BIG ANY MORT does not have anything flashy on the published worktab but there appears plenty of stamina with the longer drills and local gate drills.

Of the runners with experience there is not much between them as she lane here to make a local debut, #6 HELLO MR COPELAND wheels right back for this third start and if this one is to run a top effort it appears the right timing coming back on short rest and racing into condition, a training approach of years past. #11 HOLUS BOLUS showed progressive race to race number wise and could step up with maturity and that similar progression could be projected for #4 SECRET STATEGY as well.

Oaklawn Park Race 3

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Mason is another trainer that in the past has come out firing early in the meet and lands here with #6 ROMAN GIANT. if that trend continues, this horse could be very live first off the claim and already fits as a contender on their current (and buried) form. Contreras returns with #10 VIOLENT GIGI to Oaklawn Park a horse that holds a solid record over this course and has been able to fire of a similar freshening for the barn. Going back to the March 9th race he had to settle for place in a "winning" type effort making a wide move to finish alongside the pacesetting winner, Coltons Dream at the wire. #4 THERIDEOFALIFETIME will make his belated OP debut and belated return off a 210 day layoff. The connections had him pointed to this meet last April with Arrieta aboard, though unable to race as a vet scratch that day and when he showed up a few weeks later he crushed a claiming group at Louisiana Downs.

Oaklawn Park Race 4

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 GOLDBRICK is improving with each start and continue to take a step forward in this third start as they stretch out in distance here. #11 DAILY GRIND wheels right back in classic Lukas for this start, a second off the layoff. Wheeling back in two weeks they will stretch out in distance and pick up a rider change in Vasquez. Those factors are key, especially with the outside draw for this race to compete and would expect them to be aggressive and send looking for early speed out of the gate. This colt did not handle racing covered up and taking kickback two weeks ago with the rider easing up late and the race won gate to wire with minimal change in running order. He improved in his second start going back to the summer at SAR and could build off the 77 OptixFIG. #12 FAMOUS FINAL SCENE looks pointed to this meet for the connections and given the debut last month at CD to prepare. As far as that first start he raced green showing some interest behind the open length pacesetting winner and could take a step forward off the experience. The rider change to Eramia suggests intent and while this one could be sitting on a top effort he must prove his class for this level and to overcome the draw. #2 RUN JALEN RUN projects to be favored off the recent starts and in the money finishes. That edge is logical however as an individual his “fastest” race was the off-track event on 10/29 and his other numbers are right in line with most of this field. In addition they will stretch out for the first time and wheeling back on shorter rest without the intent for a route up to this point.

Oaklawn Park Race 5

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#7 SHE’S NOT A JOKE did not earn a strong figure on debut though the BTL effort caught the eye and likely for the connections as well as she was entered (vet scr) in a $100k stakes at PRM two weeks following the debut. She has been freshened since and pointed to this meet showing the three local breezes along with the rider upgrade to journeyman R. Zimmerman. #6 CRUISE MISSLE recorded a B OptixGRADE in her second start going back to August at ELP. She has shown progress number wise race to race. This will be her second start off the layoff and first time she will attempt to string races together. Going back to the 11/2 race she showed up with front wraps for the first time, a change should be monitored today and was also dismissed by the public off the 9-2 ML. #1 HAPPY N SMILING looks well prepared for the debut and in assertive hands with R. Santana aboard given the rail draw. As far as the group that have finished in the money including #9 SILVER ROSE, they have left something to be desired on the win end and could allow for some of the others to jump up for that top spot. #14 BANG BANG FURY is sitting on the AE and one that recorded the highest figure in the field for her debut, tough to ignore.

Oaklawn Park Race 6

Post Time 2:50 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The Ring The Bell stakes is too competitive to settle for a short price. Especially in the case of #7 RYVIT a solid individual though wheeling back from a stakes win just 19-days ago. #6 TEJANO TWIST also figures very logical and showing up for Hartman, a barn that picked up two wins on opening day. He is a deeper closer and while he has been able to close into any type of pace, a testament to class, that runstyle still requires some compensation in this field.

In terms of value, #4 TOP GUNNER has back form, solid OP form and potential intent as he makes his second start of the season in this spot. The connections took a big swing coming off the layoff in the Phoenix (G2) at KEE and tough to assess intent as he was given an EX - EXCUSE due to the trip and even class for that graded stakes level. He can improve and could show it here. #5 NECKER ISLAND the other Hartman runner has held his form this season sprinting and while looking for that belated win, he fits as well as any in this group and should have the price compensation.

Oaklawn Park Race 7

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 HALMSTAD has run some big race and big races back-to-back as he looks to continue that same pattern here. The connections wheel right back from a $300k stakes race and BTL effort from this guy as he rushed wide into a solid pace and after losing ground and position found himself fighting back for the minors. #1 PLAUSIBLE DENILE comes into with the opposite timing and off the 122-day freshening back to OP. Isolating his local OP form he looks like a different race horse and that horse becomes a contender here. Positive intent could carry to #4 UNDERHILL'S TAB as he makes his second start off the claim and off the layoff. He was not claimed on the cheap picked up for the $75k back in September, a tag that the prior connections could have been willing to take the gamble there would not be any takers. Throughout UNDERHILL'S career he has not always be the most consistent on the race track (and can be a poor gate horse) though on his best day he is sharp and fast and definitely a contender type.

Oaklawn Park Race 8

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 ORANGE DIABLO comes into this race with the stronger figures and competitive races that make him the horse to beat. Like many they will stretch out here and there has not been anything in the prior starts to suggest that distance will be the hurdle. #8 PENROD on debut suggested visually he would handle added ground and off a less than ideal trip that could have played a role in requiring some time before the next start. He returned with added ground on 10/1 at CD as part of the early pace, a solid pace that had the race slowing late. That event has been productive with a next out winner though many others coming back with improving figures. As far as productive races. #12 DUTCH MILLS debuted on 7/21 at ELP in a race that produced three next out winners in addition to three future graded stakes winners. There was intent by the connections to stretch out to a mile when entered on 8/28 (MSW 8f) unable to compete as a vet scratch. #2 TORNADO ROAD and #9 GOLDEN PLATE also debuted in a strong MSW back at Saratoga both could present upside though need to see more from them.

Oaklawn Park Race 10

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Becker brings #7 W W SCOUT'S HONOR back to Oaklawn Park and with intent looking for that first local win. The return race off the layoff last month looked to be the spot to get a race and even though they won, a prep. His form at Oaklawn Park stacks up on par and figures right in line with today's par and field. #10 IGNITIS also has some form from prior seasons that fits for today's level and slightly softer OFR than previous races under similar conditions. He turned in a BTL place finish at this level last year off a similar form cycle pattern to today when asked for early speed and that provided fitness when returning to his stalking runstyle.

#9 AFFABLE MONARCH comes into this race fresh for the connections and appears peaked for this race. Prior to the 9/28 race, this horse had been protected throughout his career and while not the "win machine" had held his form and was competitive in some salty races. They took the risk to run for the tag and there was a taker that $40k claim also allows the connections starter eligibility a further option if this level does not work out.

Turfway Park Race 3

Post Time 5:55 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Longshot #8 EVOCATION showed more run than the line and finishing position on debut indicates and can IMPROVE off that initial experience.