Handicapping Analysis
Sat December 9th, 2023

Stakes Spotlight

Oaklawn Park Race 9

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#7 EFFORTLESSLYELGANT makes her second start off the layoff and what appears intent as she was likely pointed to this stakes race and the connections confident to push forward (two solid works since) following the allowance last month. As far as that race, she had legit trouble at the start before getting rushed into a duel and before losing ground. One of the big tells she might require the race was the addition of front wraps, a change from prior starts and a removal could appear today. #11 BUTTERBEAN did pick up a G3 win in her sophomore season, though the connections realize she is not quite to the level and have been smart with the management and placing her in stakes races where she can compete and pick up a check; and this spot is no exception. #5 SADDLE UP JESSIE will be tested to transfer her current mid-Atlantic form, something that is not always a given on the circuit switch. With that said, the current connections are right to give her a chance to prove herself and this spot is more reasonable than the Go For Wand (G3) they entered and scratched from last week to run here instead.

#4 LOVELY RIDE is worth a mention as she won this race last year and that will be a talking point for this race. Last year the weather played a role with the poor track conditions and racing in the rain, but perhaps not as much as the lone trip she was able to establish. She tends to need that scenario to run her top effort and today’s race shape is more contentious, a projected scenario to the 2021 Mistletoe when she took pace pressure and lacked finish. The connections will also be represented by #9 ADELINE JULIA, a filly that had success here last season and returns from a recent stakes win, a strong effort where she took pressure every step of the way and must be fully recovered to run back to that effort to compete here.