Handicapping Analysis
Thu December 21st, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Gulfstream Park Race 1

Post Time 11:10 AM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Historically, early speed dominates the 5f turf sprints and while just a limited sample this season, the winners were on the lead or less than a length off the lead at the first call. There is a group returning from the 11/24 common race and no knocks on the overall effort from #6 SICKLE DANCE though the one that showed gate speed that day was #1 APPLAUSE (outbroke #3 BEACHLAND) before Zayas took hold. They rated WIDE and made contact with SICKLE DANCE the two bumping and parked wide in the opening 1/4. APPLAUSE is on the smaller side suited to the one-turn distance and second off this would be the time for her to improve.

The track profile is noted overall and in the case for #5 UP FOR IT one that otherwise fits this race as a contender and has form on this course with the place finish back on 2/18 making a late run after the SLOG. The profile is also noted for #4 OOLONG HALL one that has shown early speed over this course profile in the past and come up short without excuse.

Gulfstream Park Race 2

Post Time 11:39 AM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Tough to know if it was a bad ML on 12/8 as #8 IF NOT FOR LUCK took a lot of wagering support off the 20-1 ML. His effort was honest with a slight shuffle rating in the pocket behind lone winner, Jam Session moving off the inside to gain willingly (and pass) after the wire. Class wise the return here with a class rise, though similar par with the shift to statebred company. Pairing the figure from 18-days ago would have him back in the mix and has back numbers to support that figure (with potential improvement) from the sophomore season.

Gulfstream Park Race 3

Post Time 12:08 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 TAPINTOYOURBEER comes into this race with the most consistent form and form at this level. While that should not be any excuse, he must still work a trip from the rail and overcome the pattern of finishing in the minors. The move from the rail could upgrade #6 TUWAIM as he did not seem to handle the KICKBACK playing a role in the place finish. The added ground could also be a positive for this individual.

Gulfstream Park Race 4

Post Time 12:37 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 HONOR GOLD presents some upside on multiple fronts returning in this spot. He has shown an "every other" pattern struggling to pair up top efforts since the debut. That pattern along with the quick 13-day timing on 11/25 played against him. They were able to allow him to show more early speed and might have learned that is not the ideal for this horse, though at the same time should provide added fitness.

#1 ARTILLEAN turned in a "winning" race for the level two weeks ago though looked "peaked" for that race and the 12-1 odds are less likely here. The route-to-sprint moved this horse up in the past and going sprint to route has not shown much improvement number wise. #4 GINGERSNAP JACK has yet to run that fast race though to his credit he has improved with each start and could continue to step forward today. #7 PRIX DE WEST has the one effort back in August at Saratoga that fits with this field though overall form is rather average and must be some reason there were no takers/claims when this one dropped down in class last out.

Gulfstream Park Race 5

Post Time 1:06 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Steve Klesaris has started off the meet strong with eight starters. Removing the maiden runners from that sample he comes into this race with a 4-3-1 record and that trend could continue with the capable pair #7 DIVA READY and #8 WINTER PRINCESS.

Gulfstream Park Race 6

Post Time 1:36 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 MIGHTY MIRACLE returns with the class change back to a level where he has been effective in the past. He comes back with some recency and showing gate speed (POP) on 11/19 something that will be key from the rail and with the 5f profile. Number wise #3 ZOZAN paired up figures from his first two starts and with the class change to run here protected suggests intent.

Trainer Anthony Margotta, Jr. does not send out many first time starters, a condensed sample over the years though can pop from time to time and when they do the odds are fair paying double digits noted for #5 BATTALION BOUND here. J. Velazquez has three wins this meet one of those for this barn.

Gulfstream Park Race 7

Post Time 2:06 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 LIGHTNING TONES will look for back-to-back wins at this level and one that has been able to hold his form. With that said he is the dramatic late run (Q4 Square) type that requires pace to close into like the race FLOW on 11/24 in his favor. As far as the early pace, #6 THE DISTRACTOR has the "speed of the speed" ability and form over this maiden track and distance. The win on 11/5 was a top effort effort since coming off the long layoff this year and some regression could have set in on 12/1 as well as lack of intent stepped up in class on the 26-day turnaround - excusing that race he has 46-days, added recovery since the November win.

Gulfstream Park Race 8

Post Time 2:36 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 LUCKY CURLIN can be upgraded as he makes his second start on this circuit, off the layoff and flow upgrade stacked WIDE on a Very Fast early pace in that return earlier this month. Further intent could be in play as he is back in for a claiming tag for the first time since claimed back in February. #3 TARTUFO will also find some class relief as he must race for the tag today to compete at this level, the first time in his career.

The recency edge sides with #5 NOVO SOL over #4 TWELVE VOLT MAN of the Joseph pair. NOVO SOL was effective with a similar pattern going back to June with Zayas aboard. They stepped up in class struggling with the level and conditions at Woodbine where a return to form here at GP has been in play in prior seasons.

Gulfstream Park Race 9

Post Time 3:06 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 RUNNIN' ROCKET has been looking for the turf going back to his debut (and three scratches with the surface intention) prior to the dominant maiden win last month on the synthetic. The foundation, recency and class could see him take that step up in this field against winners and turf for the first time. #3 KING OF THE TRACK was dominant/B+ breaking his maiden on debut back in August, though has struggled since in graded stakes company and will look to regain some confidence off the two month break here.