Handicapping Analysis
Sat December 23rd, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Fair Grounds Race 1

Post Time 12:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Starting with the runners with experience all three have shown run and could step up here. #6 WISH CAREFULLY improved with the shift to statebred company last month where #5 BLAME ME SERIOUSLY made a WIDE CLOSE in a $75k stakes race and #1 RAZOR CREST also showed interest at two points and should benefit from the PREP/experience. While those three showed run they also showed poor gate (SLOG, TROUBLE_S) antics and there are a few first time starters coming in with "bullets" from the gate and could expect early speed.

The shorter of the group, #3 AUTIE is one but also one that has been handled with "kid gloves" noting the pattern to create some reservations. #4 HENNESSY WILD has a lot of foundation despite the four published moves. The barn has sent out just one other FTS this year back in June at EVD the horse, Angelic Knight showed gate speed and stalked by the chalk caught late at 32-1.

Fair Grounds Race 2

Post Time 12:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Morning line favorite #7 EL MAGINIFICO physically has a TURF look and his top figure last month was earned on the better part of the track at CD and prior starts has lost ground. While capable, he is taking on some lightly raced runners with upside that are more intriguing.

#8 PHANTOM SPEED recorded a "B" OptixGRADE on debut with an X_WIDE trip in a full field from the outside post. He appears to have come out of the race well wheeling back in 29-days and has recorded two maintenance works since.

#2 ETHAN ENERGY is not the most efficient mover (perhaps some reason off two months) though showed run on debut making a MOVE through TRAFFIC and can IMPROVE off the first start as well as handle more ground. The 10/22 event has been productive with two next out winners and with improving figures on others. #4 KISSTHEMOON also projects to IMPROVE off the 11/25 debut where he was compromised from the outside draw, SLOG/TROUBLE_S and showed interest making MOVE X_FLOW and NO_PUSH late.

Fair Grounds Race 3

Post Time 1:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 LOVELY PRINCESS has the class edge in this field and logical on that front. As the race appears "on paper" there should be plenty of early pace for her to target and make her run, something key with the distance change and for an individual that in her wins has required the right trip.

#6 JOIN THE DANCE will make a return in this spot and first start for the new connections picked up from the KEE sale last month. She has some ability and one that also has some issues with the layoff lines throughout her career. Going back to her most recent start the Violet Stakes, that was a sneaky good effort battling for a show blanket. Part of the trip began on the backstretch when she flipped to the left lead early and stayed on that leg around the turn and into the lane losing energy and ground as a result.

#7 CREATIVE CAIRO is in good form right now and the right time for the connections to give her another stakes try, a level she has come up short in the win end in the past. #1 COLORS OF THE WIND is lighter on numbers, though given an upgrade from the stakes at Lone Star showing run against the track profile/X_BIAS.

Fair Grounds Race 4

Post Time 1:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 LEGALIZE was favored over #3 AGOO when they met back on October at Keeneland and the two improved from that race and logical on that form.

#1 TRIPLE TREA had the race flow in his favor winning on debut and made a WIDE MOVE (B-) in the Sanford (g3) back in July before returning to Woodbine and compromised (TROUBLES+) taking significant contact from both sides out of the gate.

#6 AMERICAN RASCAL was much the best last month at Zia Park, though had to work HARD after a rough start (SLOG, TROUBLE_S) to get the win and must be recovered here to compete, though if he is race ready he is a contender.

Fair Grounds Race 5

Post Time 2:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 BOURBON'S FAULT has shown improvement race to race and some intent for this one going back to his debut when opening as the favorite from the 8-1 ML. He he has the two turn foundation and noted he was very fractious in the GATE on 11/25. #4 DIMATIC could present some upside in this second start. Going back to 11/26, he drew in off the AE and with the outside post had to use for position stalking WIDE on a profile that favored inside runners. He did have to slight check though not enough to count as "trouble" that impacted him overall on the day. To his credit he stayed on and should have plenty of fitness for this event.

As far as the first time starters, #5 BISATE could be live off the series of works, works I have not seen to validate with visuals.

The morning line favorites #6 MOSAICO MAN and #2 JUSTIFREAK (on the inside profile 11/25) must step up there is nothing to support at the shorter number on their current form.

Fair Grounds Race 6

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#12 LE GRIS projected to move up on the TURF, the surface that was intended on debut and on 10/29, scratched off-turf. They found the grass last month and compromised at the start as well as X_WIDE/ground loss showing a MOVE to finish second. That race shape is worth noting as there was a blanket for the minors (both #1 DOUBLE NEAT and #5 OCEAN VICTORY earning B- OptixGRADE despite the shift in finishing position) behind the open length pacesetting winner, St. Armands Key.

Another common race on 11/18 with place finisher #9 CABERNAYDO earning B OptixGRADE, the lone B in the field making a WIDE MOVE together at the wire with the "lone, flow" winner, Malibu Rain. #6 SUGAR HOOK also showed run making a MOVE through TRAFFIC against the dynamic/X_FLOW.

It is interesting with J. Graham taking the call of #4 CESNOLA showing up for a second start. One could make the case this could be a first start as he was V_SLOG on debut and detached from the field without much ask late.

Fair Grounds Race 7

Post Time 3:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The Fern Creek stakes was a loaded restricted stakes race that has been productive; #3 HALINA FORTE did race with the inside profile (a profile to keep in mind with #6 BRUNCH PUNCH on 11/25), she validate the debut win with a change in running style holding her own in that competitive stakes event.

Fair Grounds Race 8

Post Time 3:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#10 EVAN SING will look to find some racing luck returning from back-to-back BTL efforts despite finishing off the board. Some of the "trip" was self-inflicted SLOG leaving him too much to do. His most recent win over over this course, distance and similar stakes level to suggest intent returning here fresh.

#8 MINNESOTA READY comes into this race with solid form and will look to transfer that form back to the turf. As far as his turf form, most of those races were contested at a longer distance, outside of the 3/16 race here last season, finishing second after a SLOG, TROUBLE_S.

#6 PRIVATE CREED is tough to find knocks as the favorite and the connections returning to sprinting on the turf, the surface/distance where he had success as a juvenile. In terms of the recent wins, he did have favorable trips/profile, though could find similar here. Favorable "trips" also noted for #9 SOSUA SUMMER during the summer at SAR and will give up recency after they were unable to draw into the 6f turf sprint stakes last month at AQU.

Fair Grounds Race 9

Post Time 4:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 LEGADEMA recorded the higher figure of the field with her pacesetting (SAVED) win in the 11/23 debut closing weekend at CD. There is nothing off that effort to suggest the added ground will be an issue and her early speed can also carry and present dominant.

#1 ALPINE PRINCESS was upgraded (IMPROVE) off the debut and did just that breaking her maiden closing SAR weekend. The connections wheeled right back to the Alcibiades (G1) where she had some excuse with poor rider TACTIC- and WIDE trip. She returned with that race behind her and some confidence with the allowance win and will look to keep the momentum and form into this stakes race. Place finisher #3 SISTINA CHAPEL made a positive PRERACE+ appearance and BTL effort also noting that was a two week turnaround off the MSW win. She has another quick return here and something to note as she will require another move forward number wise compared to others in the field.

Perhaps some added early speed as Cox rerouting #6 WEST OMAHA here as she was part of the group that scratched (Trapeze 8f $75k) last week from stakes races at Remington Park. #4 FIBBER could also show early speed exiting sprint races and sprint races with fast early paces, that should haver her closer to the pace naturally.

Fair Grounds Race 10

Post Time 4:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 ENGLISH TAVERN could be overlooked off the recent running line at Turfway Park, a race they took after scratching on 11/18 at CD with those races off-the-turf. Going back to last season and this race he turned in a solid effort with a WIDE trip finishing second and also in the same season a BTL show in the FG (G3) in February.

#7 STREET READY also scratched on 11/18 with the surface switch and has rerouted here. This one was claimed for the higher $100k tag and some intent for this one and a horse that has some black-type and back class throughout his career.

Value is the prime determining factor on #11 HARLAN ESTATE, a horse that is capable though does not hold any edge in this group and can be upgraded/downgraded based on the post time odds.

The pace of this race is noted with most of the projected early speed drawn on the outside and that includes morning line favorite, #12 TWO EMMYS (no value) returning off the 308-day break and with #13 LAW PROFESSOR on his outside as they must be assertive early to establish position.

#1 SONNY SMACK is tough to make a strong contender case for, though coming back from a BTL effort that is tough to see on the running line and finishing position, is one at a big number to keep in the mix. Class is a bit light for #2 FAIR DINKUM though one that based on his runstyle could get a minor share.

Fair Grounds Race 11

Post Time 5:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 STAGE RAIDER follows the words of Raybeez (RIP) "Always keep the faith!" as he returns here looking to show his true ability and rebound from recent EX - EXCUSE races. He was given an upgrade with the two turn return in the BC Mile (G1) though did not handle the SA main track. DeVaux wheeled back and wheeled is almost the right word to also describe the break as he reared up at the start, broke in a tangle and from well, well, well off the pace made a strong CLOSE in hand/NO_PUSH.

#7 PIONEER OF MEDINA also projects to rebound here and upgraded from the TACTIC- and WIDE trip against the profile on 11/23. That race was his first start back since June and likely a race he needed as well as more ground, the two turns they find here. This was not the spot they intended as he was pointed to the JA Hawk Memorial as part of the scratched group from Remington Park on 12/15.

Fair Grounds Race 12

Post Time 5:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This race should offer value as #6 NASH projects to be favored off the open length maiden win and figure earned on 11/12 and betting pattern in the first two starts. As far as his debut he chased Booth (a beaten 3-5 favorite in the Ed Brown) the front running winner, though lost ground on that one in the lane despite holding place. He returned for his own open length maiden win though had the LONE lead and race FLOW in his favor.

#3 RISK IT was dominant on debut though did have the track BIAS in his favor. The connections quickly returned 28-days later in the Iroquois (G3) at CD and at time when the Asmussen barn was COLD and to his credit earned place. They were freshened and pointed to the KY JC (G2) and while the intention was there the trip was not. After sitting in a perfect position early, the TACTIC- taking hold found him in TROUBLE+ and compromised - the rider change in play today was expected.

#1 NEXT LEVEL has foundation on his side and some form from the summer at DMR to suggest a move forward in this spot and second off the layoff. The front running MSW last month was not a "taxing" race as he was able to establish a soft pace despite some pace pressure. That race should assist in confidence as well as fitness and is not the type of horse that "needs the lead" to compete.

#2 CATCHING FREEDOM returns from a sneaky good 11/9 allowance effort earned a B OptixGRADE despite the 4th place result lacking ROOM at a crucial point in running. He is deserving of the class test as an improving type and one that has had to overcome adversity - a change from his stablemate Nash as well as rival #8 TRACK PHANTOM.