Handicapping Analysis
Sat December 30th, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Fair Grounds Race 1

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 BREAKING NEWS could get overlooked returning here for H. Rodriguez. The "every other" pattern comes into play and key returning to the BTL trip on 11/18 with legit TROUBLE+ and earning a B OptixGRADE. #4 MAGIC CASTLE was a late scratch on 12/8 and returns here racing protected. The race earlier this month was schedule for a route distance and had been a concern for this individual, though does not hold that distance limitation here.

Fair Grounds Race 2

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 MISS TULSA was reclaimed by Forster and returns to FG and the route distance in a similar condition where she was competitive last season.

Fair Grounds Race 3

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 MONEY WELL SPENT has intent at this level and the turf keying off the surface switch scratch under similar conditions with B. Curtis on 12/1. She has ben able to fire off a layoff in the past and also holds a win at this condition from last season - that win has her in for the $20k tag today. #7 SIXTH ANNIVERSARY is preferred over stablemate #9 STRAWBERRY SUNDAE as they return from the 12/1 common race. SIXTH should benefit from the return race earlier this month as well as the return to turf where she has done some of her better running.

As individuals, #10 GRACELEADSUHOME and #12 HIGHLY WICKED fit at this level though in today's race shape share a similar E/EP RunStyle and should face each other as well as others in the field as part of the early Contention and pace/trip could be a hurdle.

Fair Grounds Race 4

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The connections of #4 FOOLISH STEVE used this same angle picking up the win here on January 7th and tough to ignore with that form and intent. #1 PESO IN MY POCKET should be sitting on a peak effort. This will be the third start of the form cycle and this one has shown progression with each race of the returning and smartly also has the class change signaling intent. On his best day he has figures sprinting in line with #5 TWO WORLDS and should be longer of the two.

Fair Grounds Race 5

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 TEMPLE OF PEACE physically has the TURF look and upgraded as they shown up on that surface for this second start. A rider upgrade to Pedroza could further intent. #5 BACK BAYOU makes a return to the turf and a more reasonable spot today than the 9/4 race that featured future stakes winner, Noted.

#9 HOUSE BOURBON ran a competitive B- OptixGRADE race on debut and earned the highest recorded figure in the field. The WIDE trip and possible regression kicked in on 12/9 and might see a rebound here with potential intent as the blinkers are added and Graham jumps aboard.

#12 BONS TEMPS ROULE could take a step forward off the debut last month and some intent with timing, changes and Loveberry taking over. The race has seen a few run back none clearing the conditions though did hold form and improve their figures. #10 MO DIVA showed run on debut though not enough to justify the morning line favorite role as she makes changes all around for this second start including the shift to face colts and geldings.

Fair Grounds Race 6

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 REDEMPTION TIME holds a winning type race back at ELP in August and capable of returning to that effort here. The WIDE trip last month up close to the pace should provide this one fitness as he expects to return to his preferred stalk-and-pounce runstyle. #3 FROMANOTHERMUTHA follows a improving form cycle pattern into this race. Class wise this is a lateral move from the allowance late month though can move up on this circuit and return to a two-turn distance.

#2 FREDDY J recorded a BTL effort at this level with the fourth place finish. The effort was not quite the win, B- OptixGRADE and paired tops. #8 MASTER GAME earned the same GRADE at this level for his WIDE trip place finish on 11/30.

#7 KOLOMIO will make a belated return and one that has not been seen since February and entered and scratched from the AR Derby (G1) back in April. As a sophomore, he could project some upside, though returning from the layoff and against older, he could be given the race today and worth following going forward.

Fair Grounds Race 7

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Tough to imagine #7 NORTHERN INVADER will hold the 7-2 ML or even sit the second choice in the betting. He is value in that role as one that is a legit favorite. He has class with competitive efforts in graded stakes company with adversity and a dominant B+ effort in the Gio Ponti stakes back in October.

Fair Grounds Race 8

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

M. Lovell will send out out a pair and the preference to #9 DONCHO over second time starter #6 FRIO RIVER. The 11/25 gate move from DONCHO was dominant. He quickly made up group along inside of his workmate the two briefly side by side until asserting himself clear and continued to run. The pair entered here worked together in a breeze on 12/20 and DONCHO under a big hold had to be shut down to not embarrass FRIO before getting clear on his own. DONCHO is a runner.

McPeek worked #1 THOUSAND SPRINGS and #3 BARON OF THE NILE together from the gate on 12/23. BARON showed gate speed under a hold while SPRINGS was pushed along inside to get in front, though seems BARON could have been clear early if that was the design.

#2 MIDNIGHT AVENGER was much the best over his mate from the gate on 12/22. He took the first part of the drill to find his stride though once he got going found his rhythm, might benefit from added ground.

#8 HERO WORSHIP returns with Geroux after the TRAFFIC TROUBLE trip show in his debut last month. #4 EVAN ON EARTH broke SLOG before making a WIDE MOVE holding show behind the open length chalk winner, Mystik Dan.

Fair Grounds Race 9

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 SPARTAN QUEEN showed ability in her debut here last season and has shown improvement returning this year and taking her game to the grass. She will step up against winners though has foundation under her belt and the placement could be a confident one.

#12 FREE LOOK has back class keying off her solid graded stakes. She will make her second start for Cox and the connections that picked up this filly at the recent KEE Sale. She raced just weeks after the purchase picking up the N1X allowance win with a POCKET trip and has been freshened for this stakes try.

Stidham will send out a pair in this race and while #3 TUFANI has the stakes experience overall she does not have that much of a current edge over stablemate #1 MO BILLS.

Fair Grounds Race 10

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 KING'S LUTE projects upside returning from the 12/2 common race, a race run over poor track conditions. He was making his first start off the 300-day break and given no favors at the draw playing a role in the WIDE trip. He draws better today and has more tactical speed for Lanerie taking over to work with. #9 COMANCHE WARRIOR also has the benefit of fitness returning for this second start off the layoff. He was part of the Fast early pace and a flow upgrade in addition to overall projected improvement.

#3 MYGLORYBEE turned in a big effort at even bigger odds nearly pulling off a massive upset. The BTL effort earned a B, showing TWO_MOVES to get into the race after a SLOG/TROUBLE_S through traffic. The track conditions perhaps that played a role, though in terms of cycle the effort was a first start off 81-days and ran a new top, an effort she must repeat or improve off of to win today. #4 LIKE THIS also picking up the B grade in the show finish coming up short as the favorite.

#6 ANGELIC KNIGHT returns to this level but out of a different race on 12/16. Their form this season fits on par, however the timing is noted as this will be the third start of the cycle and wheeling right back in two weeks after pairing new tops.

Oaklawn Park Race 1

Post Time 12:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#8 PRIDDIS appears live for the connections first off the claim and layoff. They sent out another runner this meet called Canavall with a similar pattern showing up with a credible show finish and similar intent looks in play.

#4 HISSY MISSY has the benefit of a start as she returns to the level of the 12/8 race with added ground and fitness. She has form over this course and two distance with number on par for this group and level. F. Arrieta shifts to #9 WEST SIDE GIRL one that fits on her best day, though has not raced in over three months, and has come up short off the layoff and as the favorite in the past. Like #4 HISSY MISSY, #2 EMITYAAZ will not race for the $10k claiming tag in this spot. Overall her form fits with this group and here at Oaklawn where she has run her better effort and those races at the mile distance.

Oaklawn Park Race 2

Post Time 12:58 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 MISCHIEVOUS MAX will make his belated debut as one that was out at Saratoga training this summer and was unable to get race ready. They have given him some time and rerouted here where he will debut for the claiming tag and look to give jockey, H. Hernandez a live mount on his return. Fellow first time starter #3 SAM’S PROMISE could get overlooked and can present live for the connections. The Compton barn (and rider N. Juarez) can pop with a first time starter at this maiden claiming level.

Overall it is tough to assess the second time starters all making changes as they return here and without much to support off their debut efforts. The class drop makes sense for #6 WE MISS ARLINGTON showing up here for their second start. The October event was average for the level and could see improvement especially from the gate and looking to show speed with the 10-lb weight break with Bealmear aboard.

Oaklawn Park Race 3

Post Time 1:26 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 GREEK HEIRESS was scheduled to run under similar conditions at RP in October and shows intent after that vet scratch to land here for the same $30k tag without a drop. She fired fresh for Milligan and holds form over this course with the two place finish efforts last year both fit with figures on par for this race. O'Neill will show up with #9 SWEET MOTHER MARY and the barn making an Oaklawn return. They sent out a string back in 2020 and had success with that group and this filly fits as she ships in. Her form on the main track sprinting sits on par and can be upgraded given the trip and show finish last moth at a higher par at DMR. #10 BEAUTIFUL AND BOLD returns with class relief and looks to be the right move for this filly. She has held her form and figures this season and last meet though had been facing a higher level of N2 rivals and overmatched against those rivals. As far as the return to a sprint she broke her maiden on debut sprinting and was entered for 7f ($30k N2 CD) on 11/4.

Oaklawn Park Race 4

Post Time 1:54 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 GUCCI BOY fits at this level and to his credit has hit the wire first going back to July at ELP. He also finished in a three horse blanket at the wire last month at CD under similar conditions. He finished alongside #3 LUNDBERG, one that rushed to set the pace and stayed on as the BOS and also has form and figures that fit at this level. #8 SHARP STICK could present upside as he makes his return to Oaklawn and the right move as he returns with class relief. He was unable to hold or improve off his form here from the spring and returning to those efforts has him in line with the more experienced and older rivals. #5 LIGHT HORSE HARRY was on the Oaklawn grounds last season unable to make a debut. They will return here and while the trainer does not have the strong first out win numbers, there has been a few in the limited sample that finished in the money.

Oaklawn Park Race 5

Post Time 2:22 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#11 MEMES projects to be favored in this race a role he is familiar with and has come up short in. He fits in this group and likely intent though we have seen his best and can often break slow something to consider with the draw and his early speed outside others that could be looking for that same trip. As far as the group returning from the 12/8 race, #8 MOTOWN COLLECTION sent off as the second choice likely lost his race in the gate, fractious in the stall he broke slow and in a tangle compromising himself early on.

#5 DALTON'S RUTROW caught the eye in his debut here last season showing more run than the line and finishing position suggest. He projected to IMPROVE off that effort and did showing more early speed in a WIDE DUEL in a race where the top two finishers as the favorites stalked inside and finished together at the wire. It is worth following Sam's Promise in Race 2 as the connections return with another first time starter in #3 PREACHER'S KID. This one was on track to start last year unable to make a race they could be race ready off previous intent. As an AR-bred they will race for the $20k in this $12.5k MCL event. and could have a few live runners on the card. On a couple occasions last season the barn had multiple winners on a single card.

Oaklawn Park Race 6

Post Time 2:50 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 SUPER CONSITUTION returns from the layoff and returns with the belated class drop. He was running against a much tougher class and route distance in 2022 and similar in terms of class showing up off the layoff earlier this year. His form this year has not been as strong as previous seasons, though that form is in line with today's claiming level. #8 MEAN JAKEY is another that holds Oaklawn form and possible intent as they return off the layoff. He spent most of his career with Asmussen and after losing him here last January he was reclaimed right back in the following start and made just one more before the layoff. The time since allows them a "free roll" here as they are not in for the $30k tag. #9 INFILTRATOR has recorded some of the higher figures, numbers that should find a lot of wagering support. He also returns protected off the layoff and that could be a positive sign here as he has been claimed with those claims voided in the two recent starts and if they wanted to move on from this one, they could likely run for the tag and find interest.

Oaklawn Park Race 7

Post Time 3:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 COUNT IT ALL JOY showed progression with each start last year and returns with regular rider, R. Santana. She will also return with some upside from the April 15th race given a legit excuse with trouble at the start and trouble in running. #9 NGALA came out live to start last season with competitive efforts in her first two starts and numbers that fit with this group and MSW level. The Moquett barn has started off a little “cold” and NGALA returning off the layoff today has some gaps in her return works and that creates some reservations at a shorter number. Keying off the 4/1 she landed in a common race with #5 ALOHA BABY one that was a strong second choice making her debut and despite the outside post and giving up experience to NGALA was bet down from the 6-1 ML.

#1 MIRACLE SHOES has yet to hit the board, though visually has shown more than perhaps the running lines, finishing position and speed figures suggest. In terms of #3 STREET PAINTER she has some class concerns despite recording some of the higher figures at the MCL level. Like her debut last year, she flashed early speed and with a similar tactic today is likely to find pace pressure to her inside from #2 KOKOMO STARLET, one that has legit early speed, often not much finish as a result. As far as morning line favorite, #10 RUNNINNTHESTREETS she has consistency on her side, though has come up short without excuse of a winning effort giving preference to others for the top spot.

Oaklawn Park Race 8

Post Time 3:46 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 SKELLY makes his return and sneaks into this condition on the timing eligibility off the layoff to race protected. His early speed is the prime asset and especially in this race shape where it does not appear any can run with him early even if they try. #5 EDGE TO EDGE is likely to try as that is where he has been effective and with stablemate #1 NECKER ISLAND in this event and looking for a win at this level exiting the stakes race and minor finishers. Even if there is not a lot of contention, #6 MANNY WAH can be effective with an honest pace with his RunStyle. He also can race protected looking for the first win this year as the connections scratched form a stakes race at LRL on 12/23 picking this spot trying to catch a break to regain some confidence after a steady diet of stakes racing following his most recent win, the Phoenix (G2) last October at KEE.

Oaklawn Park Race 9

Post Time 4:14 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Following the pattern from Race 8, the Asmussen trained #1 HIGH CLASS could hold a pace advantage in this 5.5f sprint. She has early speed with the rail draw and class/finishing ability over her likely pacesetting rivals, #3 I’M THE BOSS OF ME returning from the layoff and #4 MARGOINABUBBLEBATH coming off a weaker allowance win with a flow aided trip three weeks ago. Asmussen could come prepared sending out #6 TOPSY as she returns from a stalking trip stakes win last month at Zia Park however this race is a step up in class and will be tested here against this group. #2 DEALING JUSTICE wheels right back in two weeks off the claim and off a subtle trip that she can improve off of unable to show her best on the day. While class is a test, the new connections taking a shot in this race and a cagey move with no risk as the upset win would be a quick return on investment and then some.

Oaklawn Park Race 10

Post Time 4:40 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Looking for a new face outside of the runners that return from the allowance condition earlier this month: #8 PATE makes her first start for Brisset back at Oaklawn Park familiar grounds and the sprint distance. #12 HARTLEY struggled at this allowance condition last season, though her two competitive races to date were the debut and off a similar long layoff and her best is not far off many in this field. #7 LACEY BOSS also returning fresh today is weaker on class, though her best is also not far off many in this field and her runstyle should fit today’s race shape. #13 BACKYARD MONEY return from the 12/8 common race and showing speed in that event from the inside given the draw. That trip is not one that has been effective for her as she prefers to race outside horse and this draw should she draw in will definitely allow for outside trip.