Handicapping Analysis
Sun December 31st, 2023

Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Park Race 1

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#8 LEMON MUFFIN has had her gate issues and played a role in the outcome as well as her trip from off the pace. With that said she has been competitive in all three starts and upgraded from the X_WIDE trip on 11/24 against a profile that favored inside runners. She has the foundation and a local gate move as she makes the local debut. #6 BOLD APPEAL will make her belated debut at the end of the season. She was on track in training earlier this year and working in company with West Sunset, a stakes type. She was not quite on the level of that filly though holding her own in the drill and since the break she has been consistent in the works since. #7 BLUE SQUALL will make a return and fresh after the pair of place finishes and strong figures in the first two starts, number that stand out in this group. She (like many of the runners with experience) has had the tendency to break slow.

Oaklawn Park Race 2

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 TORTUGA ISLAND wheels right back in this spot and repeating pattern from her dominant allowance win on 10/24. As far as the December start she looked overmatched “on paper” and today’s race par is softer. The race shape and dynamic was a subtle extreme and she also returns with the blinkers on, a rider change and possible front wrap removal. She could be higher than rival #5 READY FOR TROUBLE going back to the common race where both were long shots on the day and TROUBLE benefit from the race flow.

#6 HAYEK could have intent for Oaklawn Park as she makes her first start off the claim. She was claimed back in October out of the MCL win and in training the barn could have found a spot at WO, however, decided to wait, ship and train here. She must step up on this circuit but could be the noted intent and one that races protected. #11 HUSH IT HONEY might have shown regression and a lack of intent for the 11/18 race coming off the maiden win and on the 16-day turnaround with added ground. She has been rested 43-days for this event and working locally with the return to the one turn distance.

#9 HITTIN MY STRIDE was probable “best” on 11/3 at DED settling for place, together with first run winner at the wire after lacking room at a crucial point in running. The change today for this circuit class and field has her stepping up and requires price compensation, which might not be there.

Oaklawn Park Race 3

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 GI GIS MAP was green on debut though showed run earning a follow. She will return today with changes for this second start and despite racing for the tag, a claiming tag in line with her purchase price and intent all the same. #6 PLEASINGLY makes a return to the MCL level and similar conditions when staying on as the BOS back in October at KEE. Class wise it could be taken as a lateral move to run at the MSW level at RP and given the poor track conditions and slog, she was upgraded making up ground on the pacesetting winner, the only runner in the field to improve position. As far as the first time starters #11 BENT HALO could be overlooked and some intent for this spot on debut. She was entered on 11/17 for $30k, a trainer scratch that day and showed up here off steady works and in for the higher $45k tag and similar purse.

Oaklawn Park Race 4

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#8 STHENIC returns for a second start and upgraded from the debut back in July. She was off slow before rushing along the inside for position and had to set a fast pace to do so, a pace that caught up to her late as she still tried to fight back holding place. #11 LINNIE MAE coming into the debut with some posted “bullets” in the work tab and C. Torres aboard for a barn, he does not often ride for. #4 BREAKFASTRUN also shows a “bullet” over the course along with a worktab for a barn that is capable and has experience beyond the stats getting younger horses race ready. #1 LADY WOO PIG has a steady series of local works for a barn that cam pop with a first time starting AR-bred runner. #5 MO HOPEFUL will debut for M. Wilson the barn sent out a FTS in this category one year to the date called Lassie My Girl, one that showed gate speed finishing on the wrong side of a photo finish and noted action as she was bet down to 7-1 from a 15-1 ML, something to look for on the board today.

Oaklawn Park Race 5

Post Time 2:22 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This race could be one to follow as many in here have shown run in limited starts and hold upside. #2 IMPERIAL GUN earned a follow off the debut earlier this month at OP. The 4th place result was a BTL effort as this one took kickback after a slog and moved between horses putting in a late close. The experience, added ground and rider change suggest further intent for this one in the second start. #3 LINEBACKER has the benefit of experience and improving figures. Going back to his debut at KEE, a BTL effort though also from a visual standpoint presented as a router and will have the added ground here today. Prat had been aboard for the first two starts and will shift to #6 BOX OFFICE this afternoon, another that physically has the router look and upgraded with the change in distance. His debut also showed run in that 5th place result given the TRAFFIC trip making a MOVE and continued to GALLOP+ after the wire.

#8 TELL ‘EM I’M COMIN has the benefit of local experience and could be overlooked for the connections. He made a positive PRERACE+ appearance and showed run after rough start. #10 GOLD SEARCH must also improve, though could see improvement from this one give the rough start on debut at CD and chasing WIDE against a inside favoring profile and race shape with minimal change in running order. #5 FAMOUS FINAL SCENE has the route experience and at the right distance for this individual, though must step up as others are a tough faster coming into this race.

Interesting that #11 WILL TAKE IT debuts here as he had been training down in FL with Ralph Nicks. He has some local works and watching him train there is nothing to knock, the one work in blinkers.

Oaklawn Park Race 6

Post Time 2:50 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#8 GO CAPTAIN should not be short on fitness with the local worktab and series of “bullets” at DED. This is not one I have seen train to follow his development, though going back to June he worked fast, a 9.4 clocking and still looked to be growing into his longer frame at the time. He has some shared dates to a stablemate called Floating Beauty, one we will see later on the card – that filly debuted at DED on 11/25 and won by open 16 lengths according to the official chart and recording a number that stacks up with those that have run so far. #6 IRISH RANSOM returns from a productive race back on 11/10 for this second start. He chased evenly in a race with minimal change in running order and has shown intent to race at this meet unable to draw into a similar conditioned event opening week, 12/8. Arrieta was named that day for IRISH and sticks with #4 CHUN MONEY as he wheels right back from that 12/8 race where he was still GREEN and WASTED a lot of energy prerace and chased evenly inside behind pacesetting FTS winner, Texas Town, and race favorite Crushed It for B. Cox. #14 MR FILLIP is sitting on the AE and might have to wait for another day though the one to follow from the 11/13 MSW RP race.

Oaklawn Park Race 7

Post Time 3:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 BOOTH projects to rebound here after coming up short as the favorite in the Ed Brown stakes. Heading into that event, he had some knocks coming off a strong debut win, though a win where he was allowed an easy, lone lead and would take pace pressure based on the complexion of the field and that is exactly how it played out on the track. He also was caught WIDE in that chasing role and against a profile that seemed to favor inside runners. His stablemate #2 VALENTINE CANDY stood out over the Advent group and finds a step up in class here as he wheels right back. He will also be out to prove he can pair top effort, something he has yet to show. The class change is also noted for #6 TEJON PASS one exiting the Bob Hope (G3) and has yet to show much progression, something required to compete for the top spot here.

#4 NORMANDY HERO has foundation and consistency as he shows up here and while he does not have any edge, he fits with this group and has some versatility to work with for regular rider, A. Achard. Number wise both #5 GENERAL SHIPMAN and #7 FROST FREE are lighter than others though present upside from subtle trips in the Advent Stakes. The rider change is noted for FROST FREE and shift off the inside should also be a positive for this individual.

Oaklawn Park Race 8

Post Time 3:46 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The timing was less than ideal for #9 NORTHERN FLAME wheeling back off a pair of top figures into the Street Sense (G3) back in October. He has been given the time to recover, took a break in November from published works regaining the training this month here at Oaklawn. While he will give up some recency and the connections likely looking ahead toward the graded stakes on this circuit, this placement does not appear to be the end goal though his form at the graded stakes level, the two turn distance with numbers on par keep him in the mix. #8 CARBONE comes into this race with the highest recorded figure. That number was from his debut where he made an easy lead and held that advantage extending the margin to the wire. He should be out looking for a similar trip stretching out in distance looking to carry both his speed and form. #7 WILLY D'S could be overlooked even as he returns from the place finish in the Advent stakes earlier this month. He has the two turn foundation from his first two starts and visually off the BTL effort three weeks ago could project improvement as well as the added ground.

#6 LIGHTLINE was wheeling back from the debut win at Keeneland back in October and will return fresh for a second start against winners. While he was dominant on debut, the type of effort was one that projected regression and along with the WIDE trip likely played a role in the figure decline despite the place result. #2 GABARRA might not have had intent with the barn change after the debut win entering in the Ed Brown Stakes. Coming out on the track he was rank in the warm up and similar in running chasing wide early dropping back and showing late interest. Since that start he has kept up training and working here at Oaklawn Park.

Oaklawn Park Race 9

Post Time 4:14 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 TAPIT JENALLIE was so much the best in the My Trusty Cat stakes. Not only did she win by open lengths, but she did so after an awkward break possible due to the poor track conditions and puddles in front of the gate. She showed a couple moves before getting clear late and in hand to the wire. The effort was likely taxing and a positive she has been given the 51-days since to recover with some local, longer works leading into this race. The timing is also noted for #7 DENIM AND PEARLS given 36-days since the allowance win last month at CD. She was strong on the day and against some of today's rivals though visually suggested some potential regression especially if she was back too quick. #6 PULA will step up against winners here and also look to step up overall to compete with today's group and stakes level. There was some intent with her going back to the debut in August when favored at ELP. She returned with the time off to the turf in a full field at KEE and drew an outside post, a pattern that followed in the next two starts. She was upgraded from the 11/24 win with the WIDE trip against an inside profile, though was also racing for a HOT barn. The form of that MSW race has held up and the place finisher, Lemon Muffin is one to follow as she races in a MSW event earlier on the card.

Oaklawn Park Race 10

Post Time 4:40 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 PUN INTENDED returns with added ground for this second start and ships to Oaklawn from the FG base where she has been training for this race and looks well off those works and for this distance. The form of the 11/3 race has held up with Pula the show finisher coming back to break her maiden on 11/24 and worth a follow in Race 9. #3 HAPPY TALK will make her third start and has shown progress with racing. It was notable she went off favored on debut, though also could have been a default of the public with many FTS in the field. She turned in a competitive effort (B-) making a WIDE MOVE after the SLOG. She improved in the second start and experience around two turns on 11/11 – a race that has been productive with two next out winners. #12 ENIGMATIC also return from that event though will find a change in post moving from the inside to the outside and shorter of the two returning today.