Handicapping Analysis
Sun January 28th, 2024

Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Park Race 1

Post Time 12:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 PEPPERONIKID was competitive in both of the statebred MCL event, those races when in for the $20k tag they return for today. One of those efforts was the debut, a BTL effort where they had legitimate adversity playing a role in outcome. They found a more favorable tracking with the maiden win in April and Torres must negotiate that type of trip from the rail.

#3 PARTYINTHESTREETS will pick up Hernandez and look to improve in this second start off the layoff and shift from the rail. He has had some gate issues in the past and requires the right handling though is capable at this level. The barn will also show up with #10 MADMARTIGAN off the layoff. He showed run last season at the one turn distance and was able to get the right trip and race flow to make his closing run with the maiden win in May.

#7 CHUPAPI MUNYAYO returns from the layoff with the drop in class to run for the claiming tag, something that comes with overall reservations. While he does hold races over this course that fit at this level, he also has the tendency to SLOG and make that late run. If looking for a horse to find that trip, #5 STREET COMMANDER is preferred he has run as fast and has the benefit of recency and fitness coming back from the WIDE trip in this second start of the season.

#9 SECRET TAVERN will step up to take on older here though also finds a change in class to run against statebred company for the first time. He has shown legit early speed and projects show that here to keep the pace honest. He holds more upside than #2 FORSAKEN one that has run the same race since returning from the layoff and losing ground late, something of a concern in the projected favorite role.

Oaklawn Park Race 2

Post Time 12:58 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 HOOPERDRIVESTHBOAT is not anything special in this race but a logical type. He has the benefit of recency, current form and his Runstyle fits today’s race shape.

#5 GOOD SCOUT finds a change in class from the 12/17 race and upgraded as he was forced to send into a DUEL/X_FLOW from the outside post – the top two finishers from off the pace benefit from his contribution. His former stablemate #3 MAN ON THE MOON wheels back under a similar race par where he sneaks into this race under the conditions as a 6x winner. The distance change is in play and while he has yet to race at the 6f distance at any point in his career he has run at 7f at GP and shown tactical speed in those races.

#7 WELLMAN has been rerouted to this event through two cancelations for Garcia. The barn that has sent out some live runners and picking this spot over an OC $25k event back in December at TP. While he is certainly capable here, he has not raced since November and his most recent published work was back on 12/16, over a month ago.

Oaklawn Park Race 3

Post Time 1:26 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 DEEP STATE will make his return to claiming company for the first time since his win back in 12/2022. His next start off that win was over this course and distance recording a strong figure and effort in starter allowance company and behind some solid rivals including Tiger Moon. He will look to get back on track here off some subtle trips and between the layoff lines.

#7 SUPER CONSTITUTION made his first start at the claiming level on 12/30 and that race was a first start off a three month break and at the shorter sprint distance. As he returns here for a second start off the bench and with the return to a route distance should be in the right time and place to compete. He has some tactical speed, speed he was unable to show sprinting last out though should here and has a favorable draw with some of the other pacesetters drawn along the inside.

#6 AFFABLE MONARCH was overmatched against allowance company this season. His form should transfer to this level and should be sitting on a top effort given the foundation over this course in the third start of the cycle. His runstyle should suit today’s race shape.

Oaklawn Park Race 4

Post Time 1:55 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 SPEIGHT AND MALICE has been able to show more tactical speed than he was able to on 1/6 over a drying out race track making a late CLOSE for show. Arrieta was able back on 6/30 at ELP where they found a similar result though did show more tactical speed at a higher level and the 91 figure fits right on par with this level. The change in class is notable for #7 CIRCLE BACK JACK as he makes his second start of the meet. He has run some faster race at time and for this barn going back to last May at CD, those sprint races fit right on par to compete here. #6 ALBIZU has been looking for this level this meet and will make a belated seasonal debut. His form over this course fits as a concerns and could show more tactical speed given the complexion of this race if necessary to work a trip and regular rider Torres able to make that call.

#10 COLT FICTION fits overall, though will be forced to use from the outside post to get into the race. He can often break a step slow and must find position early on especially with rail runner, #1 ATOMIC TONE in the race, on that has legit early speed though has struggled to transfer his MHV/TDN form to others circuits and needs that form to compete.

Oaklawn Park Race 5

Post Time 2:25 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

A lot of attention will be on #4 OLIVIER as he makes his belated debut. He has a long series of works and fitness should not be any issue for today’s distance. Brisset is capable with debut runners and has sent out some for today’s connections; they have also mentioned scratching due to track conditions.

Santana was aboard many of those Brisset runners and he sticks with #5 MR. KEATING coming off a WIDE trip show finish in his return last month, the common race on 12/16. Distance wise would have preferred added ground coming back though still capable, though has created his own hurdles with the pattern of gate issues. The GATE issues have also been in play for #3 TRABR’S CREED in his first two starts and returns here from the 12/16 common race. He was fractious in the GATE showing speed in a duel before tiring. That was his first start of the meet, had the drying out race track and set the pace stalked by the winner and the place and show finishers, MR. KEATING and #1 MILLERS RITE moving up with the race flow from off the pace and the horse he dueled with, Raging came back to win on 1/6. The timing should also be noted as the front wraps added that day and came out of the December race to work a bullet and has fitness with the 1/19 work and while he must improve this would be the time he could pop with a top effort.

#6 SIMOVIC has been most effective sprinting and caught in TRAFFIC three weeks ago had too much to do the lone winner, Raging.

Oaklawn Park Race 6

Post Time 2:55 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 WILLY D'S earned a follow with a BTL effort in the Advent stakes and physicality to suggest he could handle more ground. He returned at the route distance on 12/31 however the timing on the three week turnaround and WIDE trip impacted him on the day and will look to rebound here. #4 GEWURZTRAMINER looked to need the race for the new connections and coming off the layoff on 12/31. Number wise he is on the sifter side, though presents a move forward today and keying off his juvenile figures to project a move forward in that department.

#7 FOOTPRINT and #6 NEXT LEVEL return from the Gun Runner Stakes last month at FG and will make the circuit switch here and for both likely to get experience over this course and eye some of the local graded stakes races depending on how today goes. FOOTPRINT has been consistent number wise, however has come up short with favorable trips and the lack of progression overall brings some class concerns – similar concern for #1 TEJON PASS one that also makes the distance change. NEXT LEVEL was not as effective in the Gun Runner though did not have the right ride (TACTIC-) on the day. While he is capable on the lead, the two races where he has had the better outcome, he is not a need the lead type and can show that versatility here. Some further intent could be in play with the connections rerouting from the Lecomte (G3) (and avoiding another rail draw) to this allowance.

#9 SEARCY is likely to get a lot of attention for the connections. To his credit, with the right ride and trip, he was able to wear down a good runner called Goldbrick that came back to win breaking his maiden, though the rest of that field sits below the runners he will face here. While he has shown progression race to race, he would require another move forward to compete here and that is something that must come with price compensation.

Oaklawn Park Race 7

Post Time 3:24 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 STARSHIP DEFIANT is just eligible for this condition and comes into this race with early speed, speed figures on par and current form and fits right in at this condition. Numbers and class sit higher than her former stablemate #5 ROYAL MEGHAN returning here.

Diodoro comes back with a pair: #2 PENS STREET cuts back to a sprint for the first time in a longtime. The shorter sprint distance has not been in play since her first two starts, breaking the maiden in MSW on debut and finishing second in allowance company both at GP. The returns In this spot and remains protected in the second start off the claim. Going back to the 12/2 FG event, the race was run over poor track conditions, and she put in a sneaky closing kick. Trip will be crucial though does have an asset with stablemate #8 CONDIMENT GIRL showing up here with early speed and a reset (as one that appreciates more time between starts) after breaking SLOG and moving up to finish in a blanket at the wire last month at ZIA.

#4 NORTHERN DIAMOND had a longshot look returning on 1/6 though was compromised by a SLOG, TROUBLE_S and from there stuck in TRAFFIC taking KICKBACK. She can present a move forward off the recent effort, though is one that requires a return to a top effort to compete as top three contender here.

Oaklawn Park Race 8

Post Time 3:52 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#7 GOLD SWEEP has some hurdles returning today as he will give up recency and two-turn experience, something he will trade for a class edge. He caught a strong filed on debut before breaking his maiden dominantly In stakes company. He followed up that win with three race series of graded stakes races as the connections will try to regain some confidence here into 2024. Going back to last summer he was working heads up with stablemate Valentine Candy, one we have seen here at Oaklawn winning both the Advent and Renaissance Stakes. He has been training at FG and has an uninterrupted by weather steady series of works without the blinkers, coming back off the layoff and has been working lately to establish stamina for this two turn test coming back off the layoff

#1 NORTHERN FLAME comes back looking for a rebate after an EX - EXCUSE on 12/31 heavily washed/WARM out and stumbled/TROUBLES+ going right to his nose and knees showing run behind the pacesetting winner, Carbone.

Both NORTHERN FLAME and #5 GETTYSBERG ADDRESS had the license to improve out of the Street Sense (G3) as the timing was less than ideal for both. GETTYSBERG ADDRESSS returns from the type of trip that was not “hidden” by any means in the Smarty Jones earlier this month. He was part of a chain reaction (TROUBLE_S) of contact at the start and followed up making a strong MOVE from off the pace and continued to GALLOP+ out after the wire in a BTL effort. He had to show a different dimension in that race and to his credit still improved his figure. #8 CHAPERONE was also part of the TROUBLE_S had a subtle trip and one that has established himself at a router though has yet to establish where he fits at this point and still looking for that lightbulb moment to take the step forward and get faster.

Oaklawn Park Race 9

Post Time 4:22 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 SUN THUNDER picked up right where he left off with a strong effort in the 1/6 return. He had to overcome the layoff, a drying out race track and a TRAFFIC trip where he was bottled up most of the running before moving up on the perfect pocket trip winner, Midnight Rising and SUN THUNDER continued to GALLOP+ after the wire – the added ground in his favor here. #5 BOLZY also returns from the 1/6 common race and a different type of TRAFFIC trip. Overall he must improve but going back to last season he showed progression with racing and can continue that here.

The pace does not appear overly contentious, and #11 RIVALRY could hold a pace advantage with his early speed. He was able to establish a LONE lead on 1/6 however he looked short on the day and has the benefit of a race retuning here. The distance is noted for #8 BEN DIESEL coming back from a respectable effort on the day though has lost ground going longer and still must prove himself on that front.

#10 HOLLYWOOD ENDING also projects to show more early speed as he returns from the 12/29 event. He projected to be the controlling speed though was taken back to rate and gave up the tactical advantage – the rider change today along with the outside post should see a more assertive ride here.