Handicapping Analysis
Sun February 11th, 2024

Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Park Race 1

Post Time 12:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 CHELSEA PIER will make some changes for this third start and should offer some value with those changes and recency running lines. As far as the changes she will make her first start on dirt as well as the route distance, though not concerned with either change for this filly, especially the distance as there has been intent for the two turns keying off a pair of scratches including most recently on 12/30 unable to draw in off the AE at Turfway. She took the 1/4 sprint needing a race and that visually BTL effort caught the eye and can IMPROVE and seems intent as the barn ships in and with those noted changes.

#1 HAPPY HAPPY is the lone mare in the field and perhaps finds this timing on her side to step forward in the second start off the layoff and subtle flow upgrade from the 12/29 common race with #3 K'ANTHIA one that came up short with PERFECT trip and could again be favored. #4 RUBY QUEEN is one of the 3yos in the field and could see some improvement today especially as she has the debut figure to build off of along with the form cycle noting the Moquett barn on the colder side starting off the meet in December.

Oaklawn Park Race 2

Post Time 1:03 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#8 SHE'S STORMING finds some positive changes to place her where she can compete in this third start off the layoff. She was in a tough spot making her first start of the season in the Poinsettia Stakes against open company and wheeled back in two weeks in a more reasonable statebred condition, though compromised with poor rider TACTIC- making a RUSH in a Very Fast early pace and returns here with a rider change and the obvious class drop. #9 BENNYKAYANDSUZYTOO returning from the 1/13 common race also finds that same change in class to run in claiming company for the first time in her career. She takes a similar, yet different path into this event for the third start off the layoff and another more obvious flow upgrade also making a RUSH (X_FLOW) into that Very Fast early pace. In addition, she has the noted rider change reuniting with Bowen, a rider that had success with her last season. #10 PUNCHY GIRL drops back to the statebred level for the second start of the season and for the first time since the 2021-22 season and placed where she can compete at this point in her career.

Oaklawn Park Race 3

Post Time 1:35 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 TEXAS TOWN showed ability in the morning and transferred those visuals into the opening day debut win. He showed his class overcoming the outside post and solid pace while holding off the Brad Cox trained favorite. TEXAS TOWN did have to run hard every step up the way given no breathers and likely (along with the weather) part of the reason he has been given the added recovery time coming back after two months for this second start. #2 BOOTH fits as the horse to beat. He broke his maiden impressively though did have a favorable scenario to do so and a less than ideal scenario (WIDE) returning in a very contentious edition of the Ed Brown Stakes. The connections had entered and scratched from the Renaissance Stakes on 12/31 though kept in the race winner Valentine Candy and take this more conservative approach in allowance company. #1 CEEPEEGEE is an interesting type landing in this spot and given another chance on the dirt for the second start this meet. His maiden win figure on the turf puts him in the mix as a contender and the placement in the Advent Stakes as well as entered/scratched from the Turfway Preview suggests the connections think highly of this one enough to consider him worthy of those stakes tries.

Oaklawn Park Race 4

Post Time 2:06 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 FAMOUS FINAL SCENE physically is a ROUTER though this season has been exposed on class at the MSW level and the class drop today should have him placed where he can compete. While he finished off the board at longer odds in those December events, the foundation, fitness, and progression should assist all around here. The class change also appears logical for #5 GREERS FERRY based on his visuals (DROP) and should move up naturally with today's group with recorded figures that fit on today's par.

#4 AMBIGUOUS does not hold any strong edge as he makes the circuit switch and local debut though his BTL effort back on 9/10 at DMR is noted and despite a less than ideal trip in October his figure did improve that day. Those two efforts fit on par and perhaps the route distance was the reason for the improvement and not necessarily the surface.

Contreras sending out live runners this meet makes #1 MIDNIGHT TIL DAWN tough to dismiss completely though must IMPROVE coming back in this spot as the shift to this circuit is a class rise.

Both McPeek and Asmussen send out a pair in this race. The McPeek runners have established form and returning from the 1/1 common race #7 RIVETAGE appeared to handle the added ground better than #6 GOLDEN PLATE one that has yet to move forward number wise from the first two starts on the NYRA circuit. In terms of the Asmussen pair, both could present some upside being lightly raced, however come into this race lighter than others in this field and longshots on their current form that must improve.

Oaklawn Park Race 5

Post Time 2:41 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 ABSOLUTE CHAOS will give up recency making his first start back in exactly one year to the date. The connections did have him entered last month in a N1 allowance, though a trainer scratch and perhaps due to the off-track, Sloppy track conditions. His edge in this field could be class though primarily pace with his naturally early speed, factors he will trade for the recency edge. #6 BACKSIDE BUZZ also skipped that 1/5 N1 allowance and probably the right move for this horse not just with the track conditions, primarily class as he appears to require this type of drop to compete. They will also reunite with Torres today, a rider that had success with this horse here last season. #4 BOAT SONG has the benefit of a local start and upgraded from the BTL effort on 12/17. The barn will bring him back to the claiming level, a claiming condition where he was more competitive last season including the April win under a similar race par to today's event.

Oaklawn Park Race 6

Post Time 3:13 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 MO MOVES has not been the most reliable type though appears logical in this race back under similar conditions and with early speed, some of the higher figures in the field and one of the older horses. The 12/16 has not been a productive event, though the horses running back have held their form; #11 STRICKLAND being one of those runners. #9 MORE MONEY MO is a legit longshot, though has races from last season to support on foundation as well as at the route distance. He is still a bit of a stab, though this would be the time for him to step up with a top effort and the price compensation should be there to get creative with.

#8 HONEST OPINION is likely to be favored with the connections being the primary factor giving off the "feels" as the safer option. To be fair, he is lightly raced, a 3yo that could present upside and a slight drop from the 1/1 event in the second start of the season. There was one next out winner from that race with Coastal Brink breaking his maiden earlier this month on the turf at HOU and could follow some of the runners returning in Race 4 as another measuring stick. #10 LUCKY IS MY NAME is another lightly raced sophomore finishing a subtle class change in his second start of the season and racing back on Lasix today. From a physical standpoint, he could move up with the added ground and while his figures are lighter of the two he might not have shown his best yet.

Oaklawn Park Race 7

Post Time 3:46 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The race shape today should create an honest early pace and a different dynamic for #6 KOBLA MAS coming back for his second start this season. He ran a competitive race (B-) all things considered and logical for the connections to keep him protected and back under similar conditions. As far as the early pacesetters, #2 ORDER OF MAGNITUDE could hold an edge over #4 AUTO GLIDE and #8 ZAP MOTION, two runners wheeling back on shorter rest with a slight step up in class from the recent claiming events. Price could be the separator between #5 KNOX giving up local experience though a fit at this level and #9 LIPS SAY BLISS one that has continued to IMPROVE and other than the SLOG pattern has been an honest type, though another coming back for this race on very short rest.

Oaklawn Park Race 8

Post Time 4:17 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#9 FLASHY LASS wheels right back from the 1/27 event and that timing could suggest intent and improvement in this second start of the cycle. She caught the WEATHER impacted poor track conditions on the day and was also very fractious in the gate and can show more tactical speed, especially in today's race shape. Bejarano had been aboard Malibu Smart, the show finisher that day and will take the call here for Moquett. (and even kick off a late Flashy double, stay tuned)

#3 LET'S DUET holds form, competitive efforts as she returns to this allowance condition. She has come up short on the win end with trip/pace the main factor in that outcome with her off the pace runstyle.

#8 JUST LIKE MAGIC was dominant making her first start for B. Cox and appears a confident move as they show up on this circuit and higher N1 allowance condition as she has starter allowance eligibility. She still must prove herself on class at this level and for this distance a similar chance in distance for #1 STORY HOUR stretching back out around two turns. The distance change was a question mark for #2 HONEY RUN on 1/27 as well as class as she has come up short of a "winning" effort at this level this season and those concerns come back today at what could be another underlay number.

Doug Anderson returns with a pair of runners in this race. Arrieta sticks with #6 INSENSITIVE following the MSW win last out over this course and distance. Perhaps that rider assignment will shift higher odds on #4 MARSHSIDE MAMA coming back for her second start as a 4yo and to this level from the 1/13 event turning in a competitive effort for the minors behind the open length dominant winner, Stellar Lily.

Oaklawn Park Race 9

Post Time 4:50 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#9 FLASHY FAST (could make for a 9/9 FLASHY double) caught a strong group in his debut back at Saratoga including a couple future stakes runners. On the day he was still green and showed run in spots with a WIDE trip. He was working well and in company with established older stakes stablemate, Sun Thunder leading up to the 1/5 return. The trip was less than ideal and to his credit showed run through adversity (TRAFFIC) and also noted he was not on his best behavior at the GATE reluctant to load and restless in the stall. The top two finishers also the top two betting choices finished together at the wire and #5 RIYADH MOON making his debut that day should be fit coming back from a WIDE trip in his second start.

Fellow second time starter #10 NATIVE LAND ran a big race in his debut on 1/13 catching a competitive and more established group giving him a big look right back. #4 VINCITA also makes a second start and the other McPeek runner. Granted he can IMPROVE off his debut, he will give up recency and takes a big step up in class on this circuit.

#1 ALWAYS BE SMART is an interesting new face though has foundation making his third career start. The changes all around should see him at higher odds today than from the first two starts. His debut in November earned a decent figure and favored in his second start was off slow and unable to impact chasing a Slow early and late pace in a race with minimal change in running order and that 12/28 race did produce one next out winner.