Handicapping Analysis
Fri March 1st, 2024

Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Park Race 1

Post Time 12:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

A tough race to open up the card with a case to be made for any in this field. Pace should be key in this case and giving #6 LICHITA a slight edge over #2 VARTON as LICHITA has some back numbers that fit over this course and distance and some further intent off the freshening for her second start this meet and kept protected.

#3 SHANIAH also has some back numbers that maker a fit as should hold value returning from the 2/4 event where she had legit adversity from start to finish unable to show her best on the day. Her runstyle and current form sits in line with #5 DIXIE PENNY and could be the higher of the two today. That could also carry to #7 WEST SIDE GIRL one that would be no surprise though does not hold any strong edge as one that could be favored or co favored.

In terms of the closers, the value edge should sit with #8 WINYAH BAY as she finds a sneaky change in class and just sneaks into this starter allowance on eligibility over #1 ABBY THE BULL DAWG one with a strong late kick though likely to get attention for the connections and off the recent place finish.

Oaklawn Park Race 2

Post Time 1:06 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 VIGANO takes the key DROP back into MCL company where he has been more effective in the past including some races over this course and two turn distance going back to prior seasons. #5 THE HEIGHTS is s tougher horse to back off his prior form though does have the surface distance experience, a more competitive races around this time last year under similar conditions. He will also return from the layoff today for Shultz, a barn that has been sending out live runners as of late. #4 AUDEN is a slightly new face and could present intent in this spot first for the barn and local works coming into this race. He was picked up for $80k back at the November sale and lands here for the $30k MCL level, a lateral change in class from MSW last out at HS Indy.

Oaklawn Park Race 3

Post Time 1:42 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#7 ROMAN CENTURIAN could find the right change in class and pace scenario from the outside in this compact field to move up in this spot. He has held his form this season with some subtle trips against a higher class and race par than what he finds today. That change in class carries to #3 TAPSASIONAL making his second start this meet off the two month freshening. His ability to show early speed should be effective in this race shape and upgraded over fellow pacesetter #5 BEER CHASER given today’s route distance.

The distance change is also in play for #2 TEXAS RED HOT coming back to Oaklawn for the first time since last season and off the three month break. His edge in addition to local form could be class as he shows up back in straight claiming company and from higher conditioned events than #1 ST ANDREWS the rival to his inside.

Oaklawn Park Race 4

Post Time 2:17 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Morning line favorite #9 MOLLY OF STRATFORD would be no surprise and could catch the right group, time, and place, though her form does not hold any strong edge and did come up short at shorter numbers without much excuse in the two races this season.

#7 BENT HALO is one of the sophomores in the field though finds a lateral change in class showing up in this MCL event. She turned in a competitive race going back to her debut and given a pass as she was stepped up above her abilities into MSW in the second start and comes back from a FLOW upgrade on 2/10 setting the pace with the top two finishers closing from off the pace.

The race flow could have been an excuse for #5 PLEASINGLY finishing off the board last month where she made sense on the drop and could move up naturally with the class change once again.

The rail draw is not favors for #1 DIFFERENTLY though is tough to dismiss given her progressive form this season and one of the four year old fillies in the field. She is upgraded from both starts making a RUSH into a Very Fast early pace on debut and setting a Fast pace duel last month #6 PINK CHIMES is not necessarily “more likely” than DIFFERENTLY though another four year old in the field and could present an edge on that front and form from her debut last year that could present further upside. She is also returning from a productive event back on 2/4 that has seen three next out winners and also noted #12 BABAS GAL from that race.

Oaklawn Park Race 5

Post Time 2:47 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

There was not much in terms of excuse for #10 SUMMORYA when she made her seasonal debut back in early January other than perhaps the layoff. She has another layoff returning here with the class drop though running back to her better races from last season has this field running for the minors. That is still an “if” and she does project to be a heavy favorite here.

#5 KITIARA was giving up recency returning from the layoff two weeks ago and could present a move forward and intent wheeling right back from that race to run here under similar conditions and buried N2 form from last season.

#4 SMARTY’S ANGEL was a weaker favorite back in December though did have an excuse on the day given the trip and TROUBLE from start to finish. The rider change last month was a positive though perhaps an over compensation in handling to avoid trouble forwardly placed though found themselves contesting a Fast early pace.

Oaklawn Park Race 6

Post Time 3:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 HAPPYMAC will make a belated return and first start of the season. He fits this condition perfectly and worth noting that they were entered and scratched from a tougher starter allowance last month and does appear a more reasonable spot to compete and where their early speed can be effective. #9 RED N WILD did run in that tougher 2/2 starter allowance and a good effort given the rail draw SLOG and made an inside MOVE showing more visually than the running line and finishing position suggests.

The Moquett entry also fits here: #1 BOLDISH has recorded some of the stronger figures and back class though is not as proven for the 6f distance while giving up some recency off the 223 day layoff. #1A BLACK STORM has held his form this season though has been his own hurdle with the pattern of SLOG and left with a lot to do late though projects to turn in another honest effort today. In terms of morning line favorite #4 MUST BE LOVE he could easily make his way into the top three selections as he fits in this race without any knocks, despite the potential to lack of value.

Oaklawn Park Race 7

Post Time 3:50 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

At the projected double digit odds, #9 LIFE ON THE NILE is worth another look at this level and in this spot to compete this season. They will make some changes returning to the route distance, adding the blinkers and rider change with the weight break as Bealmear takes over. #1 HUMOR ME NOW will look to improve as he returns from the 1/26 race when acting up in the gate breaking SLOG and late on the scene for show as the favorite. He will also pick up a rider change though not post with the rail draw once again. #2 STAR NATION is another with a rider change though still a legit longshot especially to win. He has some buried form and late kick with a subtle change in class with the foundation over this course is one at a big number that could make a showing today.

Oaklawn Park Race 8

Post Time 4:22 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This spot could be one to get creative in as there are price alternatives outside of the “logical” types #4 THERESASILVERLININ and #11 CODE FOR SUCCESS certainly capable types.

Even on the front end, #9 WINGS FROM ABOVE stepping up in class off a win might lack value and does not hold a strong edge over #2 TWIRLING TIGRESS if she can return to her top efforts from last season This could be the time in the third start, drop to claiming company and as far as her races this season contested over off-tracks and setting Fast/Very Fast early pace. De La Cruz remains aboard and had been aboard #7 DEMI earlier this season and when she pulled off the upset returning from the layoff back on opening day and that effort fits right in with this field.

#6 COLLECTED GLORY is a longshot though on her best day has races on par to contend. The connections could also show up here with intent as she makes her second start off the layoff and protected three weeks ago returns to the claiming level here and in for the $50k tag, the price tag when breaking her maiden last April.

#10 LADY DREAMER is also worth keeping on the radar she could step up in her second start of the four year old season and given added ground and recover as she had to work hard over the odd track back in January to earn the place finish.

Oaklawn Park Race 9

Post Time 4:55 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Asmussen will send out a pair including #10 RISK IT one that is still out to prove his debut win was no fluke aided by the track profile. He has shown some run in spots since and one suited to the one turn distance he remains at today wheeling back from the Swale stakes in this second start of the cycle.

His stablemate #6 CATS BY FIVE finished a distant second to a good one called Doncho and does not appear there are any Donochos in this race but still can be taken as a step up on this circuit, something that also carries to #2 ALDER.

#7 KNICKS STORM was dominant breaking his maiden on debut though off the visuals projected to regress and that could be the reason for the decline since that first start. He returns today fresh back to the dirt and sprint distance. Horses out of Turfway have had success here this meet though he will look to be the first winner to come back from that 12/20 race.

#9 HENRO will step up to take on winners and is less established than stablemate #4 ANDY’S CANDY though trades for upside. He was able to improve albeit with a favorable trip breaking his maiden two weeks ago though did not appear too taxing and the timing could be a positive sign coming right back for this race to take on winners.

#3 LEO SPRINGS is tough to make a case for as he comes into this race light compared to the others and must take a passive step forward. With that said, he showed class and grit breaking his maiden first out and had the time off before returning in a tougher spot earlier this meet off the layoff taking on winners, open company, the two turn distance and has some steady works and that fitness to build off of.

Oaklawn Park Race 10

Post Time 5:25 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 SHESASMALLTOWNGIRL is probably the most likely winner, though has come up short in the two most recent starts as the favorite. That had been without much excuse and while the class drop is in play, the par is a lateral move. #4 SHE'S MO FANCY also logical and a lateral move from the MSW debut at RP back in December, a race that has not been a strong event and one of the runners from that race, Molly of Stratford is running earlier on the card. As she makes her second start she brings more upside though still must improve and with a better break.

#11 BIG BOLT has disappointed this season, though in terms of today's race shape she fits right in and while there are concerns some of that should be compensated for on the board.

#6 OCEAN BIRD was one to take on as the favorite last month as she did not hold an edge in the field and there were further questions with the drop off the layoff. She wheels back and given a flow upgrade where she should be in the right spot, time, and place. Number wise #8 PREDICTING has run faster races and some upside from her first two starts this season and the change to run for the claiming tag. The pattern of SLOG does require price compensation though it should be there in this field and for the connections coming into this week still looking for that first win. Fellow sophomore, #1 ALAMO should move up on the DROP as well and one to consider on those creative deeper tickets.

Santa Anita Race 1

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 SIZE DOES MATTER returns fresh and back at the route distance in this second start on the turf. His first grass start back in January was BTL showing run and overall visuals to suggest he has more, unable to show his best on the day. Some further intent appears in play back under similar conditions and rider change to J. Hernandez.

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Stakes Spotlight

Turfway Park Race 6

Post Time 7:25 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

CINCINNATI TROPHY STAKES:

#8 DAZZLING DICTATOR showed ability with a BTL effort on debut and moved up in her second start, stretching out in distance over the Keeneland turf, though was compromised by the rider TACTIC- playing a role in the outcome. Freshened off that race (and rerouted from the 11/25 off-turf scratch) she broke her maiden with a strong effort back in December and took another move forward in January, a B+ effort to suggest she can take the step up in class. She was purchased after that race, has been training forwardly for capable connections and appears intent picking this stakes spot.

In terms of the B. Cox pair, #13 IMPEL is sitting on the AE and cross entered in a higher level allowance on Sunday at Oaklawn Park. She is coming off a maiden win, though out of a race that has held form. Her stablemate #6 BARBRATINA could be favored if IMPEL does not run in this spot. Overall, she has been consistent, though number wise there has been a decline since her debut and must return to a top effort in this stakes spot to compete as a contender here.