Handicapping Analysis
Fri March 8th, 2024

Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Park Race 1

Post Time 12:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 BARSTOOL BABE comes back from the 321-day layoff and while back in with MSW company today's par is lower than where she was racing last season. To prepare for the return, she brings a steady string of works and a level of consistency to run back to from all of her races last year stacking up on par. The longer layoff comes into play for #6 ALESSIA as she returns here as the lone mare in the field. The figures from her first two starts stack up strongly as the horse to beat and can give a pass for the 2022 finale with the layoff that followed and the race turning out to be mildly productive.

While #3 BELLAJU could step up in her second start and has the edge on recency, she does not come out of a strong MSW last month and still must show she can improve. #4 TANDI SUE will make her debut here and looks well prepared for this first start. She has been on the grounds training since late December and steady works coming into this event. The barn does not have "jump off the page" first out number, though capable with the right horse in the right spot.

Oaklawn Park Race 2

Post Time 1:06 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

While there are some older fillies in the field, that group will step up including #8 CASHMERE BABY coming back from a solid effort 19-days ago. Some of the lightly raced sophomore runners have shown progression and could be the time and place for them to take another step forward:

#10 KAVA makes her third start going back to opening day presented as one that will stretch out handle the added ground and has that change here. #2 BLUE EMBER also projected to improve on with added ground and did just that last month, though as she returns today she takes a step up in class and requires price compensation with that change. The class change also in play for #9 SUNNYANDSEVENTY.

#6 MOENCHANTED will look to get back on track for this race and third start this season. She appeared pointed to this meet making a debut against open at CD in November and turned in a competitive place finish on opening date. She returned last month off the two month break and caught the WEATHER impacted track conditions that potentially played a role as she raced inside, a tougher part of the track for horses on the day.

Oaklawn Park Race 3

Post Time 1:42 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

In terms of #3 CLASSIC MOMENT he is certainly capable, though there is always some concern when coming back off the layoff with the class drop. The connections with stables all over land here for the tag rather than given him another chance in allowance company. Something of a reservation at what could be a shorter number.

#7 CONGRATS ON FIFTY also returns from the layoff with the class drop to run in claiming company, though the move is more reasonable for this one based on the prior placement and looking for the right spot for this one to compete and regain confidence.

Underneath #1 FUNNY UNCLE can pick up horses making a late run. While the pace might not be overly contentious there is a scenario where they bunch up and that assists the type of closer like FUNNY UNCLE to pick up tiring runners late.

Oaklawn Park Race 4

Post Time 2:17 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 MISCHIEVOUS MAX takes a big drop second off the claim, a move that can often be a concern though for these connections this is not uncommon as they are willing to take these aggressive drops to win. MAX must still show up and run his “A” race here though given a flow upgrade on debut and upgrade from the WIDE trip last month.

The public could default to #3 EQUATE and #4 CHADRON two runners that have not shown much improvement and lack an edge in this field, factors to consider with value, or lack of.

#8 BOURBON ON FIRE is one of the more established runners and has held his form this season moving him up naturally in this spot. He is not the type that is exciting to take at a shorter number though could get overlooked here off the recent finishing position this season. He is returning from the 2/18 common race with others in this field. Out of that race, #10 ALWAYS A KING could be the one to upgrade. He was making his debut on the day, had some wagering support off the 8-1 ML and had adversity at the start, something they could look to correct here with the addition of blinkers and another work getting a blowout on 3/2 coming back for this second start.

Oaklawn Park Race 5

Post Time 2:47 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This is a conditional starter allowance that requires horses to have run for the $10k tag or less on one of their two most recent starts. #5 RIGHT TRAPPE could be sneaky in here as she took the drop in her most recent start and throughout her career had been racing at a higher level and/or protected. She comes right back for this second of the cycle and with fitness from the 2/9 WIDE trip.

#8 WEST SIDE GIRL fits with the 12/30 race where she was claimed. She was protected last week sprinting and could present intent for this race coming right back and with the added ground. #7 BEACHGRASS also fits logically here. She has the benefit of the start over this course and picks up a live rider in Torres coming back from the 2/17 race and remaining protected using her eligibility.

Oaklawn Park Race 6

Post Time 3:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 MEAN SUE moves up on the DROP something that has been required for her going back to last fall at CD. She should benefit from the 1/27 start and fitness with the WIDE trip and at a level where she can compete. #5 SAMMIES SAMURAI will look to improve as she returns under similar conditions in her second start of the meet and off the layoff. She had a subtle excuse as Bailey asked for speed then asked to rate and she was unable to hold or improve after.

#6 MAMBA OUT fits at this level coming back to take on winner for the second time. She is one that is who she is though at the right level that is all that is needed. #7 SHOW ME THE CANDY takes on winners for the first time here and a similar effort and number from that 2/2 maiden race stacks up on par. The pace should be honest and that assisted her with the pace in that win.

Oaklawn Park Race 7

Post Time 3:50 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 EGO returns to Oaklawn a course he had run well over in the past and in the right spot placed where he can compere off the layoff. He comes into this race with a steady string of works enough to get this 9yo race ready and further intent with primary rider, Torres aboard.

#7 CANADIAN PHAROAH should benefit from the 2/2 return, getting a race off the two month break and experience over the dirt. As far as the “effort” he took the worst of it at the draw for his run style with the outside post and as a result chased WIDE and was in hand/NO_PUSH before losing ground. The race as a prep should set him up for a move forward and further intent with the change in class. #9 GREATHEART also with a WIDE trip and similar overall trip in that 2/2 common race. He was claimed from that event has waited out the time to take this drop and on his best day firs right in at this level surface and distance.

#11 SEASIDE BOY one that also has back numbers that make him a player and moving forward with the conditioning this season into this third start off the layoff and drops back to the claiming level where he has recorded those more competitive races. That could also carry to #8 DEEP STATE prior to the long layoff he returned from last summer, his form fit right in on par. He has yet to return to those efforts, though he has shown some improvement this season with the connections taking the drop today where another move forward would place him right back in the mix. The pattern of SLOG this season is another hurdle, though projects to be a big number.

Oaklawn Park Race 8

Post Time 4:22 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Another conditional starter allowance requiring horses to have run for the $16k or less claiming tag in their three recent start and have not won twice since August 2023.

#3 TOMO TODO fits those conditions as his wins from last September and here on 12/15 do not count toward race eligibility. He must improve though return from a tougher spot where intent was likely minimal intent first off the claim and WIDE trip over the off track, upgraded from the profile and higher race par on that day.

#5 BIG PAPER could have some intent for this spot first off the claim and freshened for the return and showing up protected on this circuit and from a subtle trip in December where IMPROVE is projected. His overall form is lighter than par though some of his better races were recorded on the dirt and has just limited starts on that surface.

#7 EFFICIENCY stretches out for the first time this season and with for and figures this season on par and capable of showing more tactical speed with the distance change. While he has form around two turns though has also shown some distance limitations and requires everything in this favor to get the win at today’s 8.5f distance. That carries to #8 BANDERA AZTECA another stretching out and with legit early speed looking to take the field gate to wire and capable if left alone for a softer pace to secure that trip needed to win, though there are others including #2 DANCE SOME MO to keep that early pace honest.

#6 MYSTERY MO wheels right back for this race and holds current form this season though was flow aided last out and requires a top effort to win on this circuit and competitive group. #9 LEADER OF MEN also back on relative short rest finishing on the wrong side of the 2/17 photo. He was off form last season though could be back to his peak self and those races on par to win. #10 ROYAL ACT also wheeling back from that 2/17 event and one that was in hand on the day and was not allowed to show his best as one to keep on the radar if he sneaks away on the board.

Oaklawn Park Race 9

Post Time 4:55 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#7 JOKE SISI has yet to run a “bad” race since showing up locally last year. She has had some subtle trips along the way including the WIDE trip closing out the 2023 season and interesting with the connections picking this spot and mile distance. #10 BACKYARD MONEY also stretching out for the first time today and with plenty of races to date there has not been much intent to stretch out and appears some “taking a shot” intention with that change. Her presence in this race and from the outside creates more early pace, no favors to the inside four runners and even #6 JUBELLA.

#9 INTO DISCO would be the right time and place to step forward in her second start off the layoff. She return under similar conditions to the 2/4 even and reasonable improvement can be projected off the WIDE trip and conditioning. #8 STELLAR LILY takes the step up to N2 company though the right move after the dominant N1 allowance win back in January. She has been given recovery time since and that is required with the step up and another top effort required for the top spot.

Oaklawn Park Race 10

Post Time 5:25 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Giving #10 FLASHY FAST another look as this one has had some subtle trips and the connections shortening up for this race. This would be the time as he makes his third start back this season, had a compromised TRAFFIC trip off the bench in January and perhaps the over compensation last month sending to the lead and setting an honest pace before losing ground.

In terms of the group of second time starters, #5 MORUNNING had adversity at the start and made a move between horses and continued to GALLOP+. He can be upgraded from the 2/4 common race racing in the rain with declining track conditions, a common race with #8 HAPPY GREY in what appears a stronger event than the race back in June #6 HAILSTORM comes in from for that belated second start.

#2 COACH JIMI D also will make a belated returns and while improvement is required on this circuit to compete, the foundation and progressive figures from those juvenile events could transfer here and holds the experience edge over the first time starters making a belated seasonal debut.

Santa Anita Race 1

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 BOWTIE BOYS should handle the TURF as he makes the surface switch here and some upside from the WIDE trips in each start to date. #2 GOOD AT BEING BAD brings some upside off his debut back on 1/6 and intent for this spot scratched from a $50k MCL route race on Monday for this spot. In the race he had a subtle trip, though the race shape being more compromising with a lone winner (NESSO'S LASTHARRAH racing later on the card and expected favorite) and minimal change in running order. Many improved out of that race including three next out winners.

Santa Anita Race 2

Post Time 2:59 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 BRUNCH WITH AMY turned in a strong effort and figure in her debut last June. She returned validating that first start last month and with the route experience coming back into this race. She presents further upside from that trip/TACTIC- to move forward here.

#2 BLUE FASHION has the pattern of gate issues as she shows up here on the surface switch. To her credit she has remaining consistent number wise and returns today from a legit EX - EXCUSE last month.