Handicapping Analysis
Thu March 14th, 2024

Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Park Race 1

Post Time 12:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 AVALON GIRL makes a belated second start and subtle change in class from her debut back in November at CD. She was debuting very late in the meet and the only FTS in the race, a tough task going two turns giving up experience first out. To her credit, she showed run in spots and enough to suggest some improvement is available. The placement here is reasonable enough for her for her to compete as the debut number fits with most in this field and with many of those established here.

#6 GOGO BOBBYJO stepped up for the connections on this circuit and level last month. Her place finish was flow-aided though overall visuals competitive and right back under similar conditions fits again. #2 CATALINA SUNRISE wheels right back and stretching out for this second start and lightly race could move forward here. She had a tough task in her debut with the outside draw in a full field and appears some intent as she lands here and should be fit off that first start back in just over two weeks.

Oaklawn Park Race 2

Post Time 1:06 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 CADEAU DE PAIX is the wild card in here. The 9yo mare has back number that make her a major player. Though if she is a shorter number that could make her tougher to back in this spot off the layoff return last month – though would not surprise to see her win or run an improved race.

#3 DISTORTED SECRETS is back at the right level to compete and off the 39-day freshening and claim. She has held her form this season and has some tactical speed. #4 SINGING EMMA does not stand out in this group though finds a subtle class change showing up here and current form this season. That combination could just come together in the right time and place.

#1 CHASING SHADOWS has plenty of races that fit as a contender and current form that fits right in this season. The task for her is trip – she lacks early speed and makes her run from well off the pace where she needs a lot in her favor to get to the wire.

Oaklawn Park Race 3

Post Time 1:42 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The race shape is a tough read as there are many in this field stretching out in distance and not just off a recent start before for many a first in their career or a first time in a long time. That includes #8 FOREVER COOL one that does have some of the higher recorded numbers and a class drop to race here since the claim back in late January – some mixed signals for today's race. #2 DEVOTED TO YOU stretched back out on 2/17 and upgraded on that day as part of the Very Fast early pace, a flow upgrade and should bring natural early speed. That upgrade could be paired with intent as they were entered under similar restricted conditions and a trainer scratch last Friday to run here instead.

#3 GALACTIC EMPIRE comes right back in a week for this 6th start of the meet. He has followed an "every other" pattern and their effort back on 2/10 was competitive (B-) under similar conditions a more competitive visual than the 6th place finish might suggest. Zimmerman had been aboard as of late and trades places with Bowen shifting to #4 GEORGIA DEPUTY. This one also has also held his form though tougher to see as this deeper closer races well off the pace and at the mercy of the race shape to make that run.

Oaklawn Park Race 4

Post Time 2:17 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 COUNT DE MONET pulled off the upset in the Advent stakes las season though following the win lost his form and through layoff has struggled to get back to form and find where he fits. He still has many of those question marks here though does find a change to run for the claiming tag, has a bullet work this month and given the layoff lines the type that likely has to come out race ready.

#6 CHIPOFFTHEOLDBLOCK must find his old self to compete here though has the races throughout his career that would put him in the mix. He was scheduled to return in a higher AOC last month and last weekend, though a trainer scratch and could just be looking for the right spot. Court was assigned to ride that day and had been aboard this one in the past and with some success on this circuit paired back in 2022.

Assessing #2 GO WEST and keying off his Oaklawn form should be standout here. Running back to those races he is a major player here and valid in the role of the favorite that he could be at post time. His current form does not make him as strong in that role and current form that fits with the others in this field without holding any strong edge.

Oaklawn Park Race 5

Post Time 2:47 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 BOLDISH was questionable off the layoff sprinting two weeks ago though turned in solid effort with the late CLOSE and without hesitation wheels right back for this race and back at the route distance. He has been able to show some early speed in the past and that could be the plan with the rail draw and getting in light with the apprentice Barboza aboard.

#2 EL FRANCO comes into this race with sneaky form this season and some changes for this race. The class change is notable and some intent with the rider change to Arrieta and the placement as the connections were entered in a similar spot last Friday and scratched, re entered to run here instead. #3 CALIFORNIA SWING making that same reentered move to run here for Morse. He could follow a similar path of intent though will give up some recency and trip must be considered as well.

#6 CHARTER OAK has held his form this season and will make his first start as a gelding off another claim looking for the win here for Ward. Torres has been aboard this season and keeps the faith right back in the saddle.

Oaklawn Park Race 6

Post Time 3:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This is a tough race given the complexion of this field and shorter sprint distance. The front runners have questions outside of holding early speed and the others that fit on form must find a trip to work through the pace. #6 CACTUS showed some early speed coming off the layoff last month at the higher $50k N3 condition. That is not his preferred style though should assist in fitness and coming back for this event.

#5 INDULGE has been able to show early speed in the past and could be required to show more today in order to compete. Coming into this race he has had the gate issues, the pattern of SLOG coming into this race though does have the local experience and with Arrieta back aboard. #8 MIDNIGHT MAJESTY has the benefit of current form and progressive form coming into this race. He could use that to his advantage and might even benefit from the subtle change in post and distance here.

Oaklawn Park Race 7

Post Time 3:50 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#12 SUN THUNDER has not run a bad race this season, though still must show more to get the win. His form and class from the races this season should present an edge today, one he could require with today's full field and the outside draw.

#2 B MINOR looked to be given the 1/26 return as a prep with the projection to improve with the added (STRETCH) ground. Given the added ground last month, he paired up figures though showed a different dynamic setting the pace for the first time in his career. That should assist on fitness and conditioning for this race, the third start off the layoff and even more ground to work with.

#6 ALEXANDER HELIOS is a confirmed front runner and should also benefit from the local experience. That could be his one excuse as he sat in a perfect trip on 2/3 and just one paced when he needed to show more doing his best for show. #9 RIVALRY projects to be on the lead and has recorded some of the higher figures and does have a win at the distance breaking his maiden last September. With that said he had a favorable front end race flow on the day and when pressured in the following starts struggled to hold and could be a concern today if he does not get clear and that comfortable trip.

Oaklawn Park Race 8

Post Time 4:22 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 CODE FIVE could be given another look as they return under similar conditions from the 2/23 allowance. On the day, he opened up as the favorite, a lot of support for a horse coming off a long layoff for a belated second start and first local start. He did not have a clean break and that could suggest a move forward and must improve here today though could present upside with the quick return back under similar conditions.

CODE FIVE will find some familiar faces here with place finisher #3 MEDIA MOGUL one that had a less than ideal trip for that finishing position and #6 ZAMBEZI making a WIDE MOVE for show and the two holding consistent and current form that should hold here. That recency could present the edge over #5 MY UNCLE LEON returning from the long layoff and might benefit from the start and added ground; and even with #4 PLAUSIBLE DENILE one that ha shown some run this season and back with Santana the show finish rider from opening week, efforts good enough to hold a minor share once again.

Oaklawn Park Race 9

Post Time 4:55 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#9 MR. WORKS is one of the older horses in this field and has established current form and some of the higher figures coming into this race. Class wise this is a lateral move making the shift to statebred company. That could present the edge and better draw to #12 BRADFORD one that should be under the right conditions to compete, trip perhaps the bigger hurdle in the full field and with a tendency to SLOG. #11 OUR HEAVENLY GIFT does not draw as well coming back today from the 2/25, the change in post and projected longer odds give the shift to rival #2 OUTLAW RUN here.

#6 GENTLE BEN might be a less "obvious" returning from the 2/23 common race with #3 SPEAKING LOUD the two off at similar odds and both part of a chain reaction of contact at the start with GENTLE BEN taking the worst of it. BEN had some upside from his 1/12 debut showing run in MSW company against the profile. #4 UNNECCESSARY TRICKS also debuted in that 1/12 common race and off the visuals could see improvement with the changes making their return here.

#10 ALL GREEN LIGHTS also had some upside from his debut and from a sneaky good 1/26 effort dealing with TROUBLE and impacting his finishing position. He like many in this field will stretch out for the first time this season and taking on older runners must step up on that front as well.