Handicapping Analysis
Sun March 17th, 2024

Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Park Race 1

Post Time 12:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 RECKER POINT return was not as planned stumbling out of the gate and losing the rider at the start. Without going down in the process he moved up early and between horses and continued to run his race riderless going widest around the turn into the lane and still willingly to the wire. The race should put plenty of fitness into him and going back to this races here from last season he fits right on par and appears no worse for the wear wheeling right back for this race and picking up Bejarano as well.

#2 LIPS SAY BLISS raced for the tag on debut and the connections fortunate to not lose this one in the process as that was a dominant win on the day, a solid figure and one he has been protected after since. The effort also proved not a one off as he has paired up similar efforts this season and held his own while looking for the win. There was some concern on the quick return back in February though as they return here he has the 35-day break and a couple of works in March for this spot and further changes with Vazquez taking over and the blinkers on.

Torres sticks with #5 LUNA VIEJA and looking for some redemption after the DQ back in the first part of the meet and already some redemption for this horse coming back the following month at the FG with the win. He returns to the starter level and fresh back on this circuit and starter company after the off the turf allowance with the WIDE trip last month.

Oaklawn Park Race 2

Post Time 1:06 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 SUNDAY SPIRIT has had some self-inflicted gate issues in each start though has battled through to run competitive races at this level in this current cycle. He turned in a BTL effort X_FLOW in January and right back pairing up efforts just over a week ago.

#1 PATTON’S TIZZY could battle for the role of the favorite and a more logical type in the role for this spot. Sometimes the Brad Cox runners are favored on the connections alone and could have been the case with the one in the first two starts, though this one makes the drop to MCL company ha shown some run this season with the change in the right time, place, and group.

When #2 MONEYSTRIKE ran last week there was reason to be cautious coming off the 54-day break without a published work and for a horse that has at times lacked consistency and the big figure from 1/13 would sit like bait for public attention and turned out to be the case. While this one still has some of those consistency concerns this would be the time to come back as he should be dismissed off the recent running line and a better effort can be projected here with the timing, a similar second-off pattern when he ran that 1/13 number.

The other older runner, #3 KISSOFTHENILE makes his belated return form that 1/13 common race off the two month break and while this one has some figures that fit on par as contender he has plenty of races where he has come up short though can be left in the mix. #9 SWIFT KEY is another to be left in the mix, one that wheels back for this second start and one that showed a sneaky late kick that could see him run on and with progress compete in this group.

Oaklawn Park Race 3

Post Time 1:42 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#9 ALLO ENRY has steadily moved forward this season and finds some changes that could prove positive this afternoon. The class drop being the most obvious as this one has been protected since he was claimed almost one year ago and racing under higher conditions this season. He will also return to the sprint distance and with Santan tack aboard. This rider was up for his maiden sophomore races and for the maiden win over this course and distance and could suggest further intent here with that rider change.

#7 TRAFFIC CONTROL could be the closest to fitting this condition with his win back in October less than a month before the but off eligibility to turn in this conditional event coming back from the 2/2 open and common race. He finds a rider change to first call Torres and could present further intent with the front wraps removal as they return here in the second start of the season. #6 HERITAGE PARK follows a similar pattern from that race and another to monitor on the track with the front wrap addition off the layoff and could be fit off that race and at this level with a return to top form.

#4 CAMPISI claimed out of his return last month could present some upside here and more early speed. He wanted to show early speed last month though was unable to do so with the rough start and despite the running line and finishing position showed run in spots and making a middle WIDE MOVE. His early speed can be effective at this level and would impact the race shape showing the early speed here. The opposite end of the pace spectrum, #3 HOLDING PATTERN fits as a contention and off his current form, however trip and pace can often be a hurdle to get to the wire first with his preferred off the pace run.

Oaklawn Park Race 4

Post Time 2:17 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Another competitive restricted claiming event. #8 LANTERN’S CANDY has gone through many hands and should be at the right level and timing to compete. While the connections did not have her protected last month technically running for the higher $30k they were willing to risk her for that number. She was not asked for her best that day and not in this spot with the class drop to a level here she has been competitive in the past and stretches back out around two turn where he has been effective as well on this course.

Timothy Martin sends out a pair in this race with a case to be made for both in this spot: #6 BIG BAD DIVA makes a belated return and the drop to the right level for her abilities. She was in a tougher spot for the seasonal debut in the Mistletoe stakes a spot that appeared a prep as she was overmatched and even the class drop from the higher level N2 allowance on 1/1 where she showed run in spots though not to the level of her competition. Torres jumps aboard today and had been aboard #7 UNDECODED in the past including the two wins last season. She will find some changes here in class to run back for the claiming tag since the claim last January and with the foundation this season could land in the right time and place in this third start off the layoff and likely to show more early speed as well.

#5 MY MY is the wild card in here and while there are safer routes to land, she has races that fit from prior circuits and the timing could also signal intent. She wheels back in just over a week and out of a higher level N1 allowance where she was not asked for run, in hand and the race could be nothing more than a workout coming into this race.

Oaklawn Park Race 5

Post Time 2:47 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#8 MIA BABY comes into this race with numbers that could be on the softer side though continued to show up with consistent and competitive efforts. She showed up on this circuit following a near excuse back in November at HS Indy and finishing the right spot ran a big race back on 1/26 and just getting collared late after moving and tracking a fast early pace. She is not a true front running type though has enough tactical speed to stalk and pounce and sit right off #4 KOALA and #12 AWESOME BIRDIE.

#5 BALL GOWN does not have any strong edge as an individual in this race though could fall into the right trip, she could also find attention from the public for the connections and coming off the recent finishing positions and win. Her form and figures are in line with #10 TENACIOUS LADY and even #2 WINYAH BAY one that makes the class drop for this race and in at the claiming level for the first time this season. The move could be the right one as she has move forward race to race and requires that here as well as showing more tactical speed, something that is also required, though of the three WINYAH BAY will likely sit as the higher of the trio.

The lack of early speed is the main knock for #1 IZEONPOINT and #9 ABBY THE BULL DAWG two runners that fit here as contenders as any in this field though off the pace, deep closers need to be much the best and everything in their favor. They are tough to split with nearly identical form coming into this race and tough to use one without the other the higher odds separating early for this analysis.

Oaklawn Park Race 6

Post Time 3:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#7 PROMISES TO DANCE makes sense though not exciting at a shorter projected number. She takes the big drop and for the top barn and there are reservations with that move especially with the layoff lines. Though in this case appears the right move for her as she has not shown much progression with age and trying to find where she fits as who she is. Her early speed should be effective in this race shape though not alone with #2 DIVA TREVA one that finished in front of PROMISES TO DANCE way back in 2022 at KEE and #9 WINGS FROM ABOVE.

#4 H. T. XENA could get a lot of wagering support coming back off a win and for the live connections under similar conditions here. While she showed she is capable, she had to work hard to get the win after breaking slow taking herself out of her runstyle to make a late CLOSE to run down longtime and tiring pacesetter, #2 DIVA TREVA and comes back on less than 30-day rest. This spot, while similar in claiming tag is still considered a step up in class something to mention for #8 ESSENTIAL BUSINESS the show finisher from the common race and one not considered a prime contender though can hold form for a share again.

If that is the case, that opens up the race for the top spot and value: #3 LOFTHOUSE found herself racing in the rain coming back off the layoff last month and takes the DROP for this second start back and should be some positive intent with that move. A similar move was used here last spring and while it did not result in a win, LOFTHOUSE improved number wise with the place finish in starter allowance company.

#6 SHE’S BULLETPROOF has held her form this season and a lateral change in class coming into this event first off the claim. The timing should keep her in form and even though with the pattern of breaking a step slog, her runstyle should be able to work out a trip in today’s race shape.

Oaklawn Park Race 7

Post Time 3:50 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 PERFECT FLIGHT has waited out his time to take this class drop, the lowest level of his career. As a 5yo and one that can pop with a big race from time to time lacks the class to do so consistently. The drop should move him up naturally off his current form, form that can be expected to hold for Diodoro.

#7 ICARUS fits at this level and will get another chance coming back from the race last month and first off the claim. As far as trip he was compromised running against the profile though there was more to the story as prior to that race, his form cycle was interrupted by the weather cancelations as one that was entered and unable to compete on more than one occasion and training also impacted.

The pace scenario should be honest today with many confirmed and front runners capable of showing legit early speed. That includes #5 HOME RUN TRICK one that could be the speed of the speed, though has the others to deal with to hold for a win. Trip must also come into play for #12 CAMP DAVID looking for a better deal as he comes back in today's race shape and outside post with some tactical speed in his own right. He is one that prefers to race outside horses and finds that change from his most recent starts something of a subtle excuse for this individual and given the post position he has no excuses on that front here.

As far as class and figures #4 LYKAN is at the right level to compete and showed that with the BTL effort back in November at CD. The distance change makes him a wild card; he appears the type that could appreciate added ground though has lost ground in his limited route races. Now to be fair those two turn races were against a higher class level than what he finds here and that could be the equalizer.

Oaklawn Park Race 8

Post Time 4:22 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 BEN DIESEL should find the right group to contest at the mile distance. This one ha shown some distance limitations something that has played a role in his race record and N1 eligibility. The class and higher race par also has been a factor and while he is back under similar condition for his second start of the season, today's event bring a slightly lower race par.

Landeros will shift to stick #4 MR. THUNDERSTRUCK one that does not hold any strong edge in this field though should move up in the second start off the layoff and has back numbers and minor finishes at this level, surface and distance from prior seasons that are enough to keep in the mix at longer odds for similar outcome.

#11 BEN FRANKLIN has recorded consistent figures and numbers that fit today's race par as he steps up to take on winners. That is still a class change and while his current form and consistency is logical he is doing something new. #2 MR. KEATING as an example was tested against winners off consistent maiden figures on 2/24 and with a less than ideal ride and subtle trip comes back with the return to Santana, that experience under his belt and upside here and could be overlooked with that recent running line sitting on top as well.

Oaklawn Park Race 9

Post Time 4:55 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Starting with the "known" runners, #4 ALICIT INTENTION turned in a good effort on debut; after a rough start she make up ground though might have been flow aided with the other top two from off the pace. That presented a better outcome than #1 LADY MOSCATO one that showed early speed, a potential upgrade returning here. She could present a further move forward in this second off the layoff with stronger back numbers from the juvenile season that standout along with the rail draw and early speed that if she were to improve this could be the time, though still a big "if" requiring price compensation. Those two hold a class edge over the other three with experience as those fillies take a step up in class here.

Norm Casse will send out a pair in this race #9 SHE CALLED was entered back in August at SAR with Santana, a vet scratch that day and has been working her way around to this belated debut. She has plenty of foundation and local works, a similar pattern for #5 SHEKNOWS both should have no questions on fitness.

#7 ALMOSTGONE ROCKET will also make belated debut entered back in September at CD as an AE on the day and has not been entered since. Watching her train she is a bit of a run off, a head strong type and will have to see how that translates in a full field.

#10 OUTWORK MOM has a steady string of local works and many quick drills. She is not one I have seen to match visuals to the times, though off the series should be as race ready as possible.