Handicapping Analysis
Sat March 23rd, 2024

Jim's Picks

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:40 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

5 Breaking News - 20/1 | 2 Upbeat Melody - 5/2 | 9 Lyrical Poet - 7/2

Curious to see how things unfold as we open the meet. Took a shot with 5-BREAKING NEWS as the horse is fit from races in New Orleans and has the tactical speed to be well positioned early. A return to the Nov 18 race puts him in the mix. 2-UPBEAT MELODY is expected to head for the top as E.T. returns to Hawthorne. He has consistent works since the end of last season and will benefit from the inside draw. 9-LYRICAL POET is the second Rodriguez entrant in here. He also has speed to chase and has the fitness edge as well. He's worth consideration.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 3:08 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

8 My Tennis Shoes - 5/1 | 1 Crown Royal Kid - 5/2 | 3 Mining Camp - 6/1

We've seen improved efforts in the last couple from 8-MY TENNIS SHOES. He returns from New Orleans and has run well since shortening up and adding blinkers. Looks like he finds enough pace to chase as well. 1-CROWN ROYAL KID debuts for Rivelli with the better works of the Rivelli pair. He gets Lasix first out and is expected to get hustled away from the rail. 3-MINING CAMP is overdue for the maiden score and may welcome the main track return. He regressed with the move to the poly but has been able to remain fit.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:36 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

1 Robust - 7/5 | 6 Inside the Circle - 5/1 | 7 McVicker - 9/2

Trainer Jon Arnett comes in with a large string of horses this meet. He has 1-ROBUST in here who appears to be a standout based off figures. He is consistently close and although he only shows the one career victory, he was also DQ'd from a race where he crossed the wire first two back. 6-INSIDE THE CIRCLE has just the one win but has finished in the money in over 60% of his races. He has speed and has three drills toward the return. I expect he contends the entire way in here. 7-MCVICKER is lightly raced and takes the class plunge into the spot. It could be in search of a confidence boost as he may take better to the dirt.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 4:04 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

4 Defiant Malice - 5/1 | 3 Gianno - 7/2 | 5 Runwithheart - 12/1

Tough to determine who will be ready to handle two turns early in the meet but figure the fitness edge lies with 4-DEFIANT MALICE. Breeding suggests the distance will be no issue as I expect we see more speed from him early as well. His race a 7 1/2 furlongs two back was his best and a stalking trip could be a winning trip today. Expect we see speed from 3-GIANNO in here as he's given another chase at this level after a disappointing debut. He comes in with a pair of good breezes over the track with his most recent from the gate. 5-RUNWITHHEART could improve as he steps up off the claim while adding Lasix. He's another that is bred to run all day and comes in with a bullet drill in preparation for this race.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:32 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

9 Good Apple - 3/1 | 3 Temple Fool - 9/2 | 4 Hand Over My Heart - 12/1

With the Rivelli debut runner on the rail, I took a shot to try to beat that one in here. 9-GOOD APPLE has a race under his belt as he returns from New Orleans. He switches surface and gets some class relief as he will have to find position from the outside. With no early speed to either side of him, I expect he gets away in good order and contends the entire way. Trainer Eddie Essenpreis has a pair in here with chances as 3-TEMPLE FOOL has runs figures that would contend. He has been working forwardly toward his return but with better efforts coming around two turns, I wonder if he will need a start to post his best effort. 4-HAND OVER MY HEART gets Lasix for the first time as he has also worked nicely toward his 2024 debut. I expect we see speed from him early in here but worry that he may find some company upfront as well.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 5:00 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

6 First Kitten - 3/1 | 8 Awesome Sunday - 9/2 | 4 Dessert First - 6/1

We find a pair of horses that love this Hawthorne strip in here with 6-FIRST KITTEN and 8-AWESOME SUNDAY. First Kitten is 13-15 ITM over the track with seven wins and has the tactical speed to contend throughout. She has a pair of works toward the return and runs for a barn that is expected to have a big meet. Awesome Sunday has won half of her eight Hawthorne starts and rides a three race win streak into this spot. She needs some pace to chase as she picks up bug rider Navas in here, who could be poised for a big meet. 4-DESSERT FIRST ran well in a pair of starts in New Orleans and has also had Hawthorne success. She is likely to rate in the second flight early and should be in the mix late while at a decent price.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:28 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

7 Anna After Midnite - 6/1 | 4 Gold Oak - 7/2 | 1 Jocelyn - 9/2

A wildly difficult race as bottom level maidens compete. Coming from a solid barn and with a fitness edge is 7-ANNA AFTER MIDNIGHT as she returns from a winter in Florida. She ran a better race in her last, which was her first start with Lasix and second since adding blinkers. With the further drop, I expect we see speed from her and it may be enough to hold on late. 4-GOLD OAK ran some of the better figures of this field but many of those races came on the grass. She also drops in class today as she comes in off a pair of Fairmount works. 1-JOCELYN broke well in her last couple before backing out early. I expect we will need to see that speed early again and let's see if she can run on longer in the lane.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 5:56 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

1 Lily's Woofy - 5/2 | 7 Smile At the Storm - 15/1 | 10 Lady Atlantic - 30/1

It's a significant class drop but the fact that she runs for a higher tag is a plus in my mind for 1-LILY'S WOOFY. She is fit off races in New Orleans and runs for a barn that will have a big meet. He record over the track is excellent and she typically gets away well from the gate. 7-SMILE AT THE STORM is the other with speed as she comes in off three Fairmount drills. I expect she makes the top early but may need to clear the field as she tends to back out of it when headed. 10-LADY ATLANTIC is the longshot with a shot as she has three of her four lifetime scores at Hawthorne. She gets the benefit of the bug in the saddle and could be positioned right off the pace as she occasionally runs on late.

Hawthorne Race 9

Post Time 6:24 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

4 Lake Mills - 6/1 **9** Baseball Politics - 7/2 **6** Tapit Sam - 12/1

4-LAKE MILLS trainer Frank Kirby has had this one ready for his return as he has been able to get four consistent works over the track. Hs won't be too far off the pace at any time and should sneak away at a decent price. 9-BASEBALL POLITICS should show speed as he has been working consistently at Fairmount toward the return. He has back class and the drop should be a confidence boost. 6-TAPIT SAM was in good form to close out 2023 and is another with a consistent work pattern. With some others in here likely to take action, he's the one who could sneak away at a price.