Handicapping Analysis
Sun March 24th, 2024

Emily's Analysis

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:40 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 HOLY IMAGE is worth a value look as an individual she fits at this level as well as any. While she is coming off the layoff, that is a more neutral factor as so are others and looking at the figures from HOLY IMAGE off the layoff, including her debut win, those numbers fit with this field. Most of her career she has been placed at a higher level and even the two races at this condition last year, she was competitive in both – a WIDE trip in August and TRAFFIC earning a B- OptixGRADE in September with both events holding a higher OFR/par than today's race.

#5 SHORT STRAW early speed. She should hold a pace advantage in today's field and shorter 5f distance, something she requires as she lacks finish and even in prior local starts has come up short with the lone lead, drifting out late and in her maiden win last October finished clear though was all out shortening stride late. The recency edge and weight break upgrades #4 ONACOUNTA. She has some positional speed and finishing ability where she could put herself into the race and if SHORT STRAW starts coming back to the field, ONACOUNTA could be right there. #6 EVIE JEAN is a consistent check earner and kept in the mix here in that role with the benefit of established Hawthorne form; form in line with #7 PRIMITY one that has moved forward with racing (similar for #2 DRAGONFLY KISSES) and one to follow.

#3 SUNDAY SPEIGHT is the wild card in this spot. She could present the most upside as a lightly raced type and all of her races to date recorded as a juvenile to suggest she can move forward with maturity and some of her figures are not far off the older established types. In addition, she has spent most of her career against makes the lone start against fillies was the higher N2 allowance back in October at HS Indy where she was a legit longshot in that group. The connections coming back this season should be looking for where she fits.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 3:08 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#7 SCHMOOZIN has the recent pattern of layoff lines that is not ideal, though should hold with price compensation and intent. They will return to Hawthorne, a first time in a long time with two starts here back in 2019 during their juvenile season and still in the MSW ranks. Their figures at the time fit today's par and consistent with the dirt sprint form throughout their career. They will shift back to the dirt picking up Colon, a rider that had some early season success last year and the F. Villa barn as well with limited starters (25) picked up a couple of wins and another handful in the money.

#4 RED HORNET will make his return off the layoff though was not necessarily the plan as he was down in FL and entered a couple of times at GP with some vet scratches unable to make a race and more recently "trainer scratch" from a $5k N3L event on 3/20 at TP to run here instead. The drop today is not a concern and could be taken as even a positive.

That is a potential contrast to #2 COALMINER'S KITTEN takes a massive drop returning from the layoff and there are reservations with that type of move. In contrast to RED HORNET, COALMINER'S KITTEN has local experience with his races here last season against a much higher level. Running back to those efforts he fits, though must rely on return to those efforts to transfer as those events were also at a much, much longer distance.

The longer distances is also noted for #8 SLAVA UKRAINI as he makes his return here at the sprint distance and could be using this race for fitness going forward – a pattern that was used last year leading into the 4/20 maiden win. The difference this year is they will not race protected and perhaps a bit of a gamble they will get ignored off the recent running lines and finishing positions, though should not a subtle trip and NO_PUSH on 10/14 closing out the 2023 season and unable to show (IMPROVE?) their best on the day.

#1 I'M YOUR CAPTAIN holds early speed, the rail, a weight break, and local form that fits for this N3 condition. He requires a top effort coming off the bench though at least one can be assured where he is right from the break. I'M YOUR CAPTAIN was collared late by #3 SOVIET STANDARD last June though that race came with a few starts into the season and with the extra furlong, a 6f distance.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:36 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 KHOZAN'S SUCCESS has some distance limitations though at the right level and this race just about a mile should be fine. He has the local experience at the route distance, the place finish here last season coming off a longer 236-day layoff getting run down after setting a fast pace near the wire by Cadet Corps, a pretty solid racehorse that won right back and has been holding his own in allowance company since.

#6 ROCKET HOTSHOT has plenty of stamina with this distance not a concern at all. He can often given himself a hurdle from off the pace and while he is unlikely to be on or near the lead he needs to be assertively ridden to not leave too much to do late. He will also give up recency coming off the layoff, though can run off the bench he finish second at the $25k level off the bench last March and a repeat of that effort has him right back in the mix here.

#3 BAKENEKO has turf as his preferred surface though does find a class change to run here on the main to play as an equalizer. They will also run back in for a tag and have been protected since the play finish last June, a finish with O. Hernandez aboard and will take back over today.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 4:04 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The Arnett pair come into this race with some early speed and #6 FEROCITY the edge of sprint speed over #1 ALYANAABI one that has not been as effective in the three sprint starts to date. #2 MR. CHARMING also has been more effective at the route distance and while he has some honest sprint efforts, the 5f is shorter than his ideal.

#5 D' YANK makes his run from off the pace though comes into this event with recency in the second start off the layoff and a good prep and fitness shipping in from the open $5k class at TP. D' YANK throughout his career has improved in a "second off" pattern including when picking up his first 2023 win.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:32 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 PURPLE OCTOPUS was reclaimed after losing him off the claim back in December and finds the class drop with the return to this circuit. His one race here was on the turf last August coming up short in MSW company, though on the day was not at his best and noted with the layoff that followed. His current form and figures have him sitting as a horse to beat and as the expected favorite once again he will look to finally fulfil his duty in that role. The edge on recency and slight class edge over former stablemate #3 LARRY'S LUNCHBOX coming out of the slightly higher MCL events at the FG.

His stablemate #7 RAISERICHIESRANSOM presents some overall upside from the juvenile season and second start as a sophomore though still must improve and does not hold any edge as it currently sits over his older, more established rivals and likely to be the second choice without value in that role. #4 EIGHT MAY comes in off the layoff though has recorded consistent figures and takes the class drop to move up naturally. He is a 5yo gelding and does not present much upside though running back to what he has previously done, he could catch the right group.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 5:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 MOONLIGHT ROAD will make his second start for the connections and a switch back to the main track. He turned in a competitive race at CD in his second start making a late CLOSE behind pacesetting winner, Carbone and place finisher Goldbrick, a good horse with those two winning this year at Oaklawn. He has not show much early speed though there are runners in this field likely to set the pace with #4 SKYPASS and #6 GIMME THE CANDY – and would not be surprised to see the two T. Tracy IA-bred FTS #1 I AM LOWKEY and #3 SKALKAHO show early speed with the two showing the quick half-mile gate move on 3/10.

#8 YOUNG MISCHIEF will also debut here and just one of two four-year-old runners in the field. The barn was a perfect one-for-one with debuting runners here at Hawthorne last year with first time starting juvenile Jack Sprat at 7-2 and in 2022 did not debut a runner at Hawthorne though sent out four FTS in MSW company at Fan Duel with 2 wins and a show. Jockey Bailon was aboard for one of those wins at 14-1 and the show at 11.9-1.

As far as #6 GIMME THE CANDY he was GREEN on debut and still very “studdish” in the paddock and on the track PRERACE- when he was scheduled to make his second start on August 13th though acted up at the GATE and was a late scratch going to post as the heavy 1-2 favorite.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:28 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Trainer Michele Boyce will send out a pair of fillies that appear well-intended for this meet and fit second off the layoff. #4 R KATIEBUG has the foundation and maturity edge over #2 RIETTA splitting the pair, though number wise there is not much between them, and their form and class presents and edge over many in this group.

#8 MISS RIVER RAT is looking for another opportunity to get to the grass and should have that this meet. While she will switch back to the main track, she is capable on this surface. She broke her maiden in statebred company winning the Debutante stakes dominantly from off-the-pace in 2022. She held her form on the main at FG though lacked racing luck with the two “trips” an EX – EXCUSE (and BTL) with TROUBLE in December and in a tougher (higher OFR) in January was given no favors with a rough break (TROUBLE_S) and WIDE run.

#6 BAR MONEY presents upside all around and worth a follow as this might not be the time and place as she makes her seasonal debut off the 138-day layoff and takes on older for the first time.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 5:56 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#10 CHRISTMAS PRESENT is competitive here on his best day and had a better season than the winless record gives credit. Going back to last year, trainer Brian Cook started out strong with three wins in the first few weeks of the season and the presence of O. Mojica is definitely interesting and could suggest intent.

#8 MILLARD’S SMILE comes into this race and return to Hawthorne with current form and at the lowest level possibly in his career. Even though he was in for the $5k tag last month at the FG that race was a higher par than today’s race. Today’s par is lighter than his races here last season, where class played a role in the outcome and found the class drop effective at FD and even those three starts held a higher par than today. Rival #9 IMPULSIVENESS also brings in recency and decent local record still looking for that win. His races here last season around two turns were competitive though a slightly different, perhaps softer N2 condition.

#4 ONE WAY HOME gets in on class eligibility and takes the step up in class shifting back to this circuit. He could have just found his form and the route distance right up his alley and that improving form closing out 2023 fits on par as they return here.

Hawthorne Race 9

Post Time 6:24 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 BALADINE has the one race at this level last July and running back to that effort here he is a contender. That race is not a one off for him as he has run consistently and even higher figures in the past. He is also relatively lightly raced making his 5yo debut here and with some early speed could get the connections on the board opening week.

#9 CLYDE'S GREEN GO has yet to run a bad race, and another lightly raced for his age that has been consistent throughout his career. That will be required to hold again off a layoff and facing winners for the first time.