



Handicapping Analysis

Sat September 21st, 2024

Stakes Spotlight

Churchill Downs Race 7

Post Time 2:53 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 NEXT LEVEL looks to hold intent as he makes his second start off the layoff and return to CD with J. Loveberry. He is one of a few in this field with a race at the distance and the lone runner to also have that race over this main track. That effort back in May was BTL and caught a solid group of older allowance runners. Number wise he must step up with a top effort though the distance can be an equalizer in this case and conditioning as well with the second off chasing open length pacesetting winner, E J WON THE CUP last month at FanDuel.

Churchill Downs Race 8

Post Time 3:25 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The rider change on #9 HALINA'S FORTE is intriguing with J. Alvarado taking over today. Looking at the new OptixTRAINERGRID, in the past 3 years he has picked 14 calls with 6 wins, and a pair of place and show finishes with a positive \$0.76 ROI. As an individual this filly has shown class holding her own in graded stakes company and effective around one turn as well as on the CD main track.

Churchill Downs Race 10

Post Time 4:29 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Trainer T. Pletcher has a strong hand in this race with two accomplished fillies: #9 LIFE TALK might be the "better" of the two, though could be looking ahead at the BC as she makes a return from the 168-day layoff in this spot; #12 MISS JUSTIFY has the edge on recency and current form along with the X_FLOW/SHORTER upgraded exiting the Alabama (G1) last month and the C+ OptixGRADE might also suggest some class weakness (AVERAGE+) though sits ABOVE+ on both Speed and Plot.

Trainer, G. R. Arnold has sent out live runners in a limited sample this month to suggest intent showing up with #5 NEON ICON. She will also find the class DROP exiting the Alabama (G1) and while her numbers are on the softer side compared to others she showed some class breaking her maiden around two turns on debut and validating that effort with the benefit of experience over this course picking up the N1 allowance win in May. She is still relatively lightly raced and given the placement and timing, she could still present a move forward.

Woodbine Race 9

Post Time 4:35 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The M. Casse pair of #5 OLIVIA ROSE and #3 DANCING DUTCHESS stand out in terms of class for this event. The 5f distance is a specialty and moves up #2 SACRED DANCER in this case where she has recorded some of her stronger efforts including the win in this race last year.