Handicapping Analysis
Sat November 2nd, 2024

Emily's Analysis

Del Mar Race 4

Post Time 2:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

It seems as much as any race during the BC, this 7f test will see "pace make the race" a big factor in the outcome. That is present with today's race and the two main players to analyze with #6 SOCIETY projecting to be the controlling speed and a front end threat - something that could force #9 WAYS AND MEANS into the race early given her draw and could make it tough on that pair to stick out the win late.

#10 SCYLLA is drawn outside those two though should be able to dictate her trip as she brings in enough tactical speed to sit close and look for first run. She return with a slight freshening and looking to pick up the win back at the one-turn distance, the place where she started off her career and dominant in those early season races.

The edge on recency does side with WAYS AND MEANS making her second start of the cycle with the trio from the Ballerina (G1) off 70-days in to this race. That group includes #4 VAHVA the race favorite on the day and no real excuse in terms of inside tracking trip though perhaps flattered off the two PERFECT trips earlier this season at CD. As noted trip is key once again though should not be left in today's role of favorite.

#1 FROST AT DAWN is obviously well-intended by the connections to run during BC and tough to dismiss wheeling right back off a BTL effort (similar B- OptixGRADE as show finisher #5 PANDORA'S GIFT) in the Franklin (G2) just under three weeks ago. She broke SLOG though not her usual style as she has shown more tactical speed and from there had to deal with TRAFFIC TROUBLE before making a strong CLOSE. The surface and distance change come into play as the connections were hoping to make the turf sprint, though she has shown she can compete on the dirt keying off the Meydan form. The trainer W. Knight (worked with Ouija Board) is more concerned about the distance than the dirt fwiw.

In terms of the local runners both #2 ONE MAGIC PHILLY and #3 PLEASANT have a DMR win under their belt at the extended sprint (6.5f) distance though on class this is a big hike from the N1/N2 allowance events and much higher race par and purse.

The change in class is also a rise for #7 ZEITLOS despite picking up her first graded stakes win with the higher par and level of competition today; something that extends to #8 SOUL OF AN ANGEL one that has struggled at the top level in the past though an honest race mare that has found her best form as of late for S. Joseph.

Del Mar Race 5

Post Time 2:41 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

While #9 COGBURN is respected here as the favorite, this race given the depth and talent is tough to take a short price with alternatives and horses also capable.

#10 ISIVUNGUVUNGU had a lot of hurdles making his local debut and no easy task in running as he showed class making a RUSH into a Fast early pace X_FLOW and pointed to the BC all along. He has been given the time to recover and kept to the plan training forward and live in this race.

#8 BIG INVASION is not the type of horse that should excel at 5f given his runstyle and size though he does what is needed to be done. Throughout his career he often has been a shorter number to try and take on though nearly pulled off the upset last year at 12-1 (CLOSE pacesetting winner Nobals) and should be longer odds this time around.

In terms of early pace, certainly COGBURN can take up that role, though should find company especially with #11 BIG EVS one that won the BC Juvenile Turf Sprint (G1) last year and returns to take on older as he has developed and matured this year as a sophomore. He will look to rebound after finishing behind many of today's rivals back in August though has often shown his best with time between starts, something he did not have that day on a three week turnaround though has been given over two months into this event.

One of the 8/23 rivals #4 STARLUST was also a rival last year in the Juvenile Turf Sprint (G1) and while he did not get the win that day he more than caught the eye with the BTL effort showing gears making TWO_MOVES though TRAFFIC TROUBLE and another that has since validated those visuals and brings in a forward "every other" pattern and on the opposite side of things tends to race well off shorter rest and fitness.

In terms of #12 BRADSELL he is tough to knock as an individual though trip will be key with the high post and competition here with the projected shorter odds. #1 BELIEVING is on the opposite end with the rail draw and has been consistent perhaps to a fault with the minor finishes and will see the addition of blinkers here.

Local runners could look back on the results with the win over the course and the case for #2 MOTORIOUS though each win as been in much softer company to compare the outcome to what he has to face today. Similar could be said for the filly, #5 AG BULLET one that has her work cut out for her though a positive cut back from the route races and natural early speed that could see her fall into the right trip, timing and place going the 5 panels.

Del Mar Race 6

Post Time 3:21 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 THORPEDO ANNA merits the role of favorite in this race off her season showing a level of consistency at the top of the division - class, speed and tactical ability to put herself into the race. With that said she has had a tough campaign and is facing a tough group of older runners for the first time - that combination could be the factors that get her beat though if she is the same runner she is going to be tough here.

#9 AWESOME RESULT has been as advertised, a perfect record coming into the BC. She has looked exceptional in the morning and should bring in her A game here.

#1 CANDIED is not as "flashy" coming into this race though draws well and her runstyle fits today's race. While she lacks the star power compared to the others, she will make up for it with price compensation - a sweet combination to keep in the mix.

#6 RAGING SEA projects to lack value though has enough quality to win. She can often bring with her gate issues (SLOG, TROUBLE_S) things that require price compensation at this level. RAGING SEA finds a similar Plot position/shape to #5 SUGAR FISH one that could be flattered off the recent effort, and recorded a new top just 34-days ago some regression could be in play though not going to poke too many holes given the longer odds.

The longer odds should be in play for #7 HONOR D LADY one that would be a big upset to win, though not out of it to get a deeper minor share.

Del Mar Race 7

Post Time 4:01 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#11 REBEL'S ROMANCE is legitimate as the favorite for this race looking for a second win in this event going back to 2022 with a dominant win at KEE. He has the class and stamina on his side with connections that are capable with regular rider W. Buick sticking aboard.

#1 ROUSHAM PARK is looking for the first win of 2024 though turned in a "winning" type B OptixGRADE effort in his March return - a BTL effort with a strong WIDE BURST and less than ideal timing. The TACTIC- is noted as they return with a rider change, C. Lemaire picking up the mount; no stranger to this big stand and this horse pairing up wins together last summer.

#6 FAR BRIDGE looks to have the edge of the locally based runners and one that has some confidence on his side off the two straight wins. He has only finished off the board twice in his career and both with excuses - a BTL 5th place in the Turf Classic (G1) and the extreme race shape (SPACED) and ground loss (X_WIDE) in the United Nations (G2) this year.

Del Mar Race 8

Post Time 4:41 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This is a very intriguing edition of the BC Classic (G1) with many different storylines and potential contenders. The analysis starts with #3 CITY OF TROY a talented runner that is proven at the distance and higher class level with a favorable runstyle for today's race shape. With that said, the big question mark is the surface switch to run on the conventional dirt, a fair question though at this point based on the preparation there are no big concerns based on the way he travels. O' Brien has had him pointed to this race and with a drill on the Tapeta in company to simulate race day where the track was treated to be as close to dirt as possible. He has looked well galloping at DMR and getting a little warm though does not appear to be a concern for the connections.

Going back to BC 2023, #6 DERMA SOTOGAKE fit as a prime contender turned in a strong B OptixGRADE with the place finish and 107 figures and takes up that contender role again in 2024. The connections once again have pointed to this race, this time with a PREP as he makes his second start off the layoff and physically catches the eye working in the morning. While there are not any strong knocks physically on the other Japanese runners for this race my preference leans to DERMA SOTOGAKE visually.

On other visuals both #9 FIERCENESS and #11 SIERRA LEONE catch the eye training into this race. T. Pletcher could have a strong group this year in the BC and even as a top trainer flying under the radar this year and sending out live.

#5 SENOR BUSCADOR has outrun his odds on more than one occasion and should hold close to his ML here. He presents upside and improvement off his races returning from the layoff and following his successful trip overseas. Coming off the layoff in the Pat O'Brien (G2) the timing and sprint distance along with the in race visuals (MOVE, GALLOP+) suggested PREP and while he had a move forward into the CA Crown (G1) he was unable to run his race given the track surface and racing X_BIAS can be given an upgrade returning to DMR, a course he has run well over in the past and should have pace to target for his runstyle here.

#15 RATTLE N ROLL is a legitimate longshot, though there are some things to like here and while he needs a lot in his favor along with turning in the best race of his career, a strong effort and a share is not out of the question. Regular rider, BJ Hernandez sticks with #8 PYRENEES one that has been pointed to this race and might have made a commitment prior to RATTLE N ROLL taking this spot. His class and figures perhaps even runstyle fits in line with #14 NEXT one that makes some changes with class stepping up to G1 company and a shorter distance from the marathon events where he has dominated his competition.

Del Mar Race 9

Post Time 5:25 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The 4-1 ML is fair on #3 CINDERELLA'S DREAM one that fits as a contender though will be tested against older and for a longer distance giving up that experience to others in this field. The fair odds are noted in this case as she could be bet down as there are some questions with ML favorite #4 WAR LIKE GODDESS on the win end.

#7 CONTENT should appreciate the move back to firmer going and has BC experience turning in a BTL effort in the Juvenile Fillies Turf (G1) last year a trip with TRAFFIC TROUBLE and turned in a strong close. She wheels right back for this race and in what is fair to say "local" hands with Dettori picking up the call.

Coming out of the WO races, #2 FULL COURT FELICIA took advantage of the BIAS winning the Canadian (G2) and the LONE trip SPACED out the field to hold in the EP Taylor (G1) and should be out looking for a similar trip to try and steal on the front end. #10 MOIRA is very consistent and proven with the longer 10f races. She has often struggled from the gate breaking SLOG and in these deep competitive fields it can be tough to overcome giving the rivals a head start and still winning.

Del Mar Race 10

Post Time 6:05 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 NAKATOMI has been consistent throughout his career and this season pointed back to the BC Sprint (G1) following a less than ideal trip show finish last year. His class took over with the G1 win off the bench at SAR and turned in a BTL effort racing X_BIAS with the place finish last month at KEE. He draws outside and should have plenty of pace to track in this field and under T. Gaffalione, a rider that was not available in 2023 with the tough decision between a pair of live mounts and landed on place finisher, Gunite.

#9 REMAKE checks the boxed on class turning in a strong effort despite TROUBLE in Dubai (G1) and brings in current form off a dominant B+ win in the Korea Sprint (G3) in September from the layoff. He has trained forward for this second start of the cycle and looking the part of the DMR main track breezing to keep up his fitness for this race.

#1 RAGING TORRENT looks well out of his recent work galloping this week. The inside draw could work to his benefit as far as trip. With the slight cutback in distance he might not be as fast as others (US based #8 STRAIGHT NO CHASER, #11 SKELLY) and look to save ground with first run though needs a lot in his favor despite the recent strong speed figures, finding a tougher group and change in distance.

Del Mar Race 11

Post Time 6:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

My opinion is not very strong in this race without much overall separation between the top selections on the ML with perhaps the least interest in #9 JOHANNES given the PERFECT trips and tougher company today. #6 NOTABLE SPEECH and #7 PORTA FORTUNA look solid on form and class with plenty of upside on #1 RAMATUELLE, a sophomore filly with tons of ability and that put to the test once again.

Del Mar Race 12

Post Time 7:25 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 T O SAINT DENIS is not given much respect on the ML while looking for a belated win. He nearly found the win back in May setting a solid pace in the Alysheba (G2) tracked by the B. Cox winner, First Mission though upgraded as the horse he dueled with #13 PIPELINE (recent allowance winner) finished well off the board. Since that race, the connections reset and regrouped pointed towards the BC sending out in August for a prep (X_FLOW) and working lights out at DMR should under the radar, sitting on a peak effort. If there is a knock, it comes in terms of trip with other speed in this field, though again there will be plenty of price compensation.

#8 POST TIME could benefit from a swift pace. He has spent most of his career at the one-turn distance, though earned a strong figure in the Whitney (G1), a stronger recorded effort with the B OptixGRADE in comparison to the C+ OptixGRADE for #14 SKIPPYLONGSTOCKING. In addition the Whitney (G1) figure recorded by POST TIME is a number that stacks up on par here for this race and in line with both #1 SAUDI CROWN and #9 DOMESTIC PRODUCT the two likely race favorites.

#10 MUTH will also get some attention and while he could step up in his third start off the layoff, he must run back to his SA numbers from last fall to compete for the top spot.