Handicapping Analysis
Thu December 26th, 2024

Emily's Analysis

Santa Anita Race 1

Post Time 1:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Tough to make the case for #8 MAS RAPIDO as the favorite, though capable of winning and hitting the board, though does not hold as strong of an edge as perhaps the figures suggests. Number wise #9 COUNT OF AMAZONIA is in line with the class edge and even an edge on intent as they make their second start off the layoff with a solid B- effort (CLOSE) and upgraded on the STRETCH out for this extended sprint distance.

P. Miller makes the distance change for #3 OSCAR JOY as well as adding the blinkers and the F. Prat as further positives. Their form cycle suggests they are sitting on a top effort. #1 NEWS AT TEN should present value as horseplayers are still scared of anything rail, the draw today though another in live hands with the combination of J. Rosario taking over today for J. Sadler.

Not quite the rail, though should #2 NOBLE REFLECTION should be rail speed and a threat to take this field gate-to-wire. They should be on the gas from the jump challenging the others to run with them early and could have easier work up front with a couple of others capable of showing early speed sitting on the AE.

Santa Anita Race 2

Post Time 1:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 MADAKET ROAD was ambitiously placed in graded stakes company for their debut last month and was not disgraced against the established group especially with the winner, Bullard sitting a FREE trip with the race FLOW setting them up to score from off the pace. MADAKET ROAD was GREEN restless in the GATE and should benefit from the experience all around and the edge in that category and from the FTS-ers.

Santa Anita Race 3

Post Time 2:02 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Just one to run for #13 PAARL to draw in upgraded from the EX _ EXCUSE on debut last month. The race was compromised at the break, VSLOG and with TROUBLE+ in running showed a MOVE X_FLOW finishing with a strong CLOSE.

#12 BEEHAVIN also with adversity on debut and tough to argue against a rider upgrade here with F. Prat in town picking up the call. In addition to the TACTIC_ trip first out, they made a MOVE after the SLOG finishing in a blanket for minors followed by a strong GALLOP+.

Santa Anita Race 4

Post Time 2:32 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 NENE DIAMOND showed early speed on debut, something that could be present here and negate a potential pace advantage for #9 BARBERA with the class edge of the duo. NENE DIAMOND at the least should hold options on trip and looking for that edge on trip with main rival #1 STOP DIGGING cutting back in distance for this race. The rider change also noted though in this case (not unlike the others on the card, really) will get attention here and likely much shorter than the 5-2 projection.

Santa Anita Race 5

Post Time 3:02 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Couple of longshots to get creative with as #13 SAREEHA is a weaker favorite should they draw in and #5 SHOCKING GREY lacking value with the efforts at this level that lack an edge over others to justify taking a shorter number:

#7 LADY CLAYPOOLE holds buried form to support the BTL effort with the TRAFFIC TROUBLE CLOSE in a BLANKET last month at DMR under similar conditions. The change in distance here is subtle though could be positive where the rider change is obvious as L. Saez takes over though could also be positive keying off a place finish going back to the MSW days. Baltas will also show up with #3 CONTROL FUNCTION one that appears lighter on class, though all around required the 11/29 PREP coming off the long layoff.

#10 FREE AND HUMBLE has a sneaky back class edge; they hold a N1X winfrom last summer, competitive stakes efforts and should move up in this second start off the layoff fit from the WIDE trip and should hold value with the rider assignment. P. Miller also with #12 REAL FIRE competitive keying off the BTL two back (10/12) over this course and distance and with the rider change following the TACTIC- that impacted their trip and outcome in the 11/15 common race with their stablemate.

Santa Anita Race 6

Post Time 3:33 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 EXPRESS TRAIN should be favored in this race and is absolutely the play and anything other. They have run their better races at SA with an edge on numbers and class over the others in this field. There is nothing to knock on the recent races, the return from the layoff in this particular spot and as far as the layoff they show up from here, the timing is not new for them and the placement opening day is a sign of confidence.

Santa Anita Race 7

Post Time 4:03 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Unlike R6, #4 JOHANNES is the right favorite though unlikely to be a playable number in terms of fair odds. There are some other ways to play utilizing them as the favorite (or take a stab on others) to get through the race.

Santa Anita Race 8

Post Time 4:36 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

As a G1 race there is just one true G1 horse in this field, #6 MYSTIC DAN. He has shown as much on the track in the afternoon as well in the morning he looks like a class above the others training into this race. While the questions around the change in distance will be asked and valid, the first three races from MYSTIC DAN were contested at one-turn - that includes his maiden win at the shorter 5.5f distance showing early speed and earned a speed figure on that day as a juvenile that stacks up with the numbers others in here have topped out as a sophomores.

#8 RAGING TORRENT has shown an affinity for 7f distance based on their races to date, the more competitive efforts and higher figures at the distance. His physicality and recent works back up those visuals for a horse suited to the extended sprint distance.

Santa Anita Race 9

Post Time 5:08 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The Hollywood Derby (G1) could be the race to key off of but not the "obvious" runners with #1 KING OF GOSFORD finding a near perfect ground saving trip on the day and preference to others that were not as fortunate and ran competitively all the same.

#2 ATITLAN's 7th place was BTL and can IMPROVE all around off that race. They flipped the script on #5 STAY HOT back on 10/26 and no fluke as they had been right there with them (and KING OF GOSFORD) in the prior stakes starts.

#8 CATHAL must prove themself on class though can IMPROVE here. The trip was comrpmised from the outside post, WIDE X_FLOW. The have been slower to improve though always showed something going back to a BTL debut.

Santa Anita Race 10

Post Time 5:40 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#10 TAMARA brings in upside and overlay based on the assigned ML. While early on there was more hype than substance with things to prove on the track, and still some in that category, was professional on debut and responded when stepped up in the DMR Debutante (G1) turning in a dominant effort. Those two races gave her consideration in the BC Juvenile Fillies (G1) however watching her train there were some issues not shown "on paper" and played out accordingly on the track in a strong field and noted long layoff that followed. They returned from the layoff last month, and 11/15 not the time to take a shorter number though ran well in slight defeat with adversity behind a LONE winner, #8 SANDY BOTTOM - one that should find a much different race shape/scenario today.

#11 CAVALIERI should be sitting on a peak effort and capable of stepping forward off the two races to date. They have been tested in the morning working with stakes stablemate Getaway Car and Malibu (G1) runner, Imagination. CAVALIERI worked in company with stablemate #9 HOPE ROAD back on 10/27 the two heads up recording the same time on the day, HOPE ROAD might have "won" the drill and validated that winning the Bayakoa (G3) the next week whereas CAVALIERI could still have been recovering from the allowance win on 10/12 at the time.

Santa Anita Race 11

Post Time 6:12 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

There is no question #8 SHE FEELS PRETTY as the class of the field though is the 10f distance her best? Perhaps it does not have to be and she is still good enough to win here. Though at a short number would at the least look to play the "what if" in this case as the Devaux runner will be high use in the finale.

M. McCarthy is sneaky good at this longer distance and on 11/29 #6 STRUTTING was sneaky good... okay she was not sneaky good, she was obviously, very clearly, BTL good in that allowance race. The trip played against them for the win, though a winning effort by all metrics going forward. They would be odds on under similar allowance conditions, though the connections set the bar higher stepping up to this stakes race, something that was probably the plan all along and even with the conditions on the table no reason to not press forward with the initial design.

Gonzalez will take over with Rispoli shifting to stablemate, #11 MIZZYAAN one that should be sitting on a peak effort off the freshening. Each race brings upside with the local debut an EX in August, a BTL in September, the win in October, and the experience against winners in November to assist on experience here.