Handicapping Analysis
Fri December 27th, 2024

Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Race 1

Post Time 12:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 THESTRAL finds herself back into the claiming conditions and looking for that first win this season. She has held her own wins the claim and picking up checks though has come up short on win end and not much excuse in trip often at shorter numbers including three times as the favorite and expects to land in that role here. Trip will be key here from the inside even as the other factors make her logical.

With THESTRAL at a shorter number will try to get creative with #4 LADY COMMANDER in the mix. She will trade recency returning from the 257 day layoff for local experience. The change in class being key for her as well going back to last season and the two races in claiming company, a BTL in February and closing out the season with an EX in April. Trip is also key and tough to assess which type of runstyle apprentice Bealmear will go to in here as she has shown runstyle versatility.

#8 DIVINE GAL started off her career impressive pairing wins though unable to translate that form to stakes company (a bigger hurdle than the route distance) and lost form in the allowance conditions before the layoff. The return last month was encouraging at the higher conditional claiming level and a repeat figures has her in the mix and on par with the others in the field.

Oaklawn Race 2

Post Time 12:58 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 GO CATS was clever longshot idea opening week and the one runner for this very live barn to finish off the board, something they will look to turnaround here on the quick turnaround and the current season record of success is tough to dismiss.

Things have started out on the colder side for Coty Rosin though capable all around and can turn things around at any point. It could be as soon as the time and place for #2 PRINCE IS MY BOY in their second start of the cycle, second race this meet, signs of a PREP last out and from a subtle trip (SHUFFLE) and sneaky CLOSE in the 12/6 opening day common race, a similar finish to rival #4 AMERICAN HERO for another live barn (tough to dismiss) and does draw better today though with PRINCE IS MY BOY projecting to go off higher of the two.

#7 CANADIAN PHAROAH also ran on opening day though as a longshot in a higher starter allowance event. They should move up at this level, in today’s field and with the conditioning (PREP) from that start and with their runstyle in today’s projected race shape.

Oaklawn Race 3

Post Time 1:26 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 PREACHER'S KID finds class relief as they return off the layoff and back to the statebred level. Going back to last season, they debuted against open company with a sneaky good effort and projected to IMPROVE did just that in their second start. The change to statebred company came in March both races at a higher MCL level and higher par than the race they show up in here to move up naturally.

Torres shifts to #9 WILLIE CAT one of a few with the edge on recency in a second start off the layoff. The one pace/PLODDY effort as the favorite last out is tough to take back at a shorter number though should be the time to improve with fitness and slight flow upgrade. #2 BRADFORD was entered in that 12/7 maiden event though on the AE unable to draw in and has been waiting in the wings for this race and appears live for the connections, connections off to a strong start this meet. #5 YEAGER'S STRATEGY has the pattern of SLOG and requires a lot in their favor to win, though one that again at longer odds can be left in the minor mix.

#4 COACH SAM P could sneak away on the board and present value in this second start of the season and upgraded racing against the track profile two weeks ago. Their form and figures stack up on par as the find a lower one making their first appearance in statebred company.

Oaklawn Race 4

Post Time 1:54 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The race shape and subtle change in class could set up for #5 COLOSI one that can pop with the type of effort needed to run and could find that in this part of his cycle. He was third off with the improved show finish back on 10/9 and follows a similar, hidden form cycle pattern today. Juarez has had success aboard in the past and could find the right trip in today's race shape.

#1 DESOTO'S WAR will look to pair up wins coming off the recent score and fits this conditions with the three wins this year not counting toward the conditions of eligibility. That also signals a step up in class they must handle as well as the change in distance stretching out and from the rail could look to send and take this field gate to wire, something that has been effective for them at the distance in the past. They should find company in that scenario with #3 COST BASIS one that almost pulled off the score opening day with that plan of attack though has shown some distance limitations and should be noted right back today and similar with #8 EUCLID AVENUE on the outside adding more early fuel to the fire.

That early space should assist #9 WARTIME HERO with their off the pace runstyle as they make their second start back and change in class to run at this claiming level. The effort and figure from opening day stacks up on par, showed run in a less than ideal trip and returns with a rider change, C. Torres aboard.

#7 FAMILY TRADITION is preferred over #6 ARROGATE'S SPRIT returning from the 12/13 common race just two weeks ago. Back numbers give the edge to FAMILY TRADITION and upside with the form cycle coming off the layoff earlier this month and could take the step forward second off here.

Oaklawn Race 5

Post Time 2:22 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#8 TIME FOR TRUTH is worth a stab in this competitive field as they should be overlooked and higher odds something that was not the case coming off the layoff last month. Arguably they should not have been favored on the day coming of the layoff, though did not benefit from the rail draw, an upgrade today to the outside as well as rushing up along the inside and in hand after losing ground. They appear no worse for the wear going right back to work with the half mile bullet on 12/12 and for the connections placed back in this higher allowance race.

#2 HENRO is listed as the ML favorite though will be interesting if they hold that role and one that has not been favored in his career. A contender case can be made with the consistent figures in stakes company and subtle trips in those returns races that are upgraded today. A big factor in those trips is the pattern of SLOG, a self-inflicted hurdle that must be accounted for with price compensation.

#3 BOOTH could end up favored as they have been in four of the five career starts. They return from a win finishing in front of some of today's rivals closing weekend at CD. They have shown early speed though also benefit from the right type of trip when getting the win. Similar could be said for #5 GLENGARRY one that can run fast figures and perhaps given a pass off the layoff last out though also has shown his better races when able to dictate the front end and should again find company like last out.

Mike Maker could be looking to play a role in the fast early pace with #1 PROPRIETARY TRADE drawn on the rail and with stablemate #4 SAVE THE TREES a closing type sprinter that comes out of the 12/1 common race with a TRAFFIC trip on the day.

Oaklawn Race 6

Post Time 2:50 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 SPANKSTER had back numbers that gave him a look last season and showed up with the upset win at this level in March. He has held his form since and makes a belated return to the dirt though with the weather conditions could also catch another off-track, though lets be clear not all off tracks are equal and fall into that trap but that's another handicapping theory conversation for another day.

SPANKSTER has the ability to track, something that could be key here especially looking for an upset with the two ML favorites, #2 DEVIL'S TOWER and #8 DISCO BALL both runners with legitimate early speed and fit all around as individuals though must battle each other in today's race shape. DISCO BALL could be given the edge on class especially keying off the 12/1 race finishing in front of stakes runners Tejano Twist and Bango though DEVIL'S TOWER given his own praise especially for the local record and appears well intended off the freshening pointed to this meet.

In addition to DISCO BALL, Jacobsen shows up with #4 MID DAY IMAGE one that has not raced on a conventional dirt surface since the first part of his career those limited starts in the juvenile and early three year old season all of which including the debut were contested at the route distance and should take the surface record as an unknown today. That said, they fit on form class and speed figures, subtle trips in the recent tour of the KY circuit and remaining protected here again adds intrigue on this longshot.

Oaklawn Race 7

Post Time 3:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This is a chaotic full field without any strong standout or pace advantage from top to bottom. Starting on the top with #1 RAM upgrade for this meet, a return to Oaklawn, a course they have experience over int his second start off the layoff. Again trip will be key though has been paired with Santana since the Norm Casse claim and familiar with each other as well as this 6f strip.

#10 ATOMIC TONE also brings in Oaklawn form one that picked up the win in March that conditional $8k claiming race that gave them eligibility for this starter condition. They have held their form protected since and protected wheeling right back under similar conditions and from a less than ideal trip opening day that could signal intent here. Similar could carry to #3 WARP RIDE one that was an interesting longshot with the move to this circuit and main track for the connections and while tough to make an excuse on the day the quick return and remaining protected could suggest the connections were looking for an expecting a little more and giving another shot here.

#5 BORN FLAWLESS could have deal with some early heat with his forward runstyle and pressure from ML favorite, #11 THERIDEOFALIFETIME coming off the layoff. BORN FLAWLESS has held his own against many of today's rivals and holds Oaklawn form to look as a longshot. There has been intent for this level and starter condition the connections scratched from that 12/7 common race, perhaps waiting for this 6f sprint, the 5.5 shorter distance can be tricky and a specialty something that upgraded #9 EL DIABLO ROJO the 13-1 winner that day, though does not hold as much of an edge in this spot and shorter odds also projected. If looking for a longshot to throw underneath #12 PALACE KITTEN checks those boxes, a tough one to make the contender case for though comes off some subtle trips and some less than subtle with the EX TROUBLES+ opening day.

Oaklawn Race 8

Post Time 3:46 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 INVENTING ANNA will make their first start off the claim and does not necessarily have to move forward for the new connections just hold her form, put forward another consistent effort and sit the key trip. Trip was tougher from the outside draw last out at TP and also caught a WIDE trip October racing under poor WEATHER conditions on that day as well as in September.

#10 BOOGIE WOOGIE GAL finds closer to a lateral change with today's par and had things go in her favor on trip opening weekend though perhaps will benefit from that race on fitness though all around tough to dismiss on consistency and early speed in this group. #7 NO PAY NO HAY also second off from that 12/7 common race should hold form here and another minor share seems more than reasonable.

#5 SABURO'S VOW is the wild card. Along with INVENTING ANNA is one of two 4yo in the main body of the field and returning to the MCL level in this second start off the long layoff with some changes from that show finish just 13-days ago landing here could suggest intent. W. De La Cruz has been riding well and one of their better categories with maidens on this circuit.

Also should mention the other 4yo the AE runner #13 DARETOCATCHLOVE on the outside looking in though should they draw into this race is not without a chance, a longshot chance but a chance all the same.

Oaklawn Race 9

Post Time 4:14 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This is a tough race from the individuals to the race shape and the type of race to try and look for a price while respecting the recent efforts from #6 CLARET BERET and coming off a dominant effort with the win last out at RP. #13 EDISTRUDIS is the longshot to consider with some racing luck needed to draw in though after the TROUBLE_S opening week the connections come right back, and a better effort is within her abilities.

#9 LEMONESSE also does not present much in the value category though upside from the stakes race last month, compromised at the start in a race that had minimal change in running order and showed interest making a WIDE MOVE something tougher to see in the running line and finishing position. #4 QUEEN'S MARTINI also with some hidden class and upside as another lightly raced sophomore. The front wraps were added last month at CD something to look for her though on numbers did improve while in a subtle trip and BLANKET finish outcome.

#12 TITLED LADY has competitive efforts at this N1 allowance condition and fitness from the WIDE trip opening day. That said they have come up short without excuse on the win end and something to still prove on class. That also carries to #10 KEY TO SUCCESS one that will look to make that late run and capable with things to fall perfectly though more likely underneath.

Class could be the main hurdle for #2 GLORIETTE though has early speed and could be dangerous with that runstyle in today's race shape and for a live barn. #1 MANAGING MISCHIEF also brings in early speed though not a need the lead type for their best and could sit the right inside stalking trip with first run.

Oaklawn Race 10

Post Time 4:40 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Starting with the runners with experience there is not much in numbers between #8 ALOHA BABY, #9 MY JULIA and #11 QUEEN MALLARD that trio all returning from the layoff. The edge on progression and class sides with QUEEN MALLARD looking for separation showing improvement race-to-race and exiting events with the higher par than the others.

Outside of the group, there are many FTS for capable connections that could be live in this spot and before the end of the year. #6 GENTLY was working early in 2023 though had some setbacks and back been working around with consistent works since early October and should be fit off that series that includes the bullet 5f move on 12/30. #10 ROSIE COTTON was also working at Oaklawn last year and with a similar setback and response in training off the series of works. Nothing as flashy as the bullet, though the gate move on 11/24 could be tell as well as a live assignment with Vazquez aboard. The duo already with a pair of wins in six races and a show finish with a FTS on Sunday.

Santa Anita Race 1

Post Time 2:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 IRISH ROSE is still a maiden though in terms of race par finds a lateral change. Their form has been consistent and numbers fast enough to compete with buried form, sneaky BTL trips. The number should stay high not only as a maiden but with the 10/27 trip sitting on top of the pp's, a race they can IMPROVE on.

#6 CERTITUDE is given the slight edge over #7 LONG MAYSHE REIGN with today's 6f distance as the two are in line with form, figures and class.

Santa Anita Race 2

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 MONGOLIAN MAX shows up as a "new face" at this $20k MCL level to move up naturally. Most of their races to date have been contested at a higher level and digging through those trips/efforts find races that fit with this field and strongly in today's par.

Santa Anita Race 3

Post Time 3:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 BIG MAMA SUE fits as the favorite. She holds some of her most competitive races at this level. That includes the win back in July, a CLOSE X_FLOW in August and back from a B/BLANKET finish last month at DMR.

Santa Anita Race 4

Post Time 3:32 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 MR. MUSTACHE can be upgraded from the EX on debut back in late August at DMR. Their trip was compromised from the start (SLOG, TROUBLE_S) showing run making a MOVE into TROUBLE and off teh visuals can IMPROVE.

Santa Anita Race 5

Post Time 4:02 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

In terms of ML favorite, #1 SOPHISTICATE they have consistently recorded the highest figures in this field and competitive B- efforts since the debut. Those factors can present an edge over the other more experienced runners though still has themselves and key in terms of trip to overcome as one that has a tendency to SLOG, makes that run from off the pace.

Santa Anita Race 6

Post Time 4:32 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 BIG SPIN is upgraded (Plot) in this race shape and field. They fit on class and speed figures with a change in class back to claiming conditions. They have also held their own on this SoCal circuit keying off the trip and IMPROVE back on 9/2 at DMR.

Santa Anita Race 7

Post Time 5:04 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

With Rashmi opting for the stakes on opening day, #5 OMAHA GIRL could be the controlling speed in this race and look for an upset front end trip. That trip is key on their main rivals with #6 MOUFFY (stablemate Rashmi) and #7 HANG THE MOON finding class relief, exposed in the G1 BC race last month.

Santa Anita Race 9

Post Time 6:16 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

With this race staying as-is, the early pace should be honest (Sun/62 SpeedRate) for #2 BIG GEORGE to run at from off the pace. That pace scenario has been key for them and still does require some racing luck with trip and necessary price compensation - something that appears fair with the assigned 8-1 ML.