Handicapping Analysis
Sun December 29th, 2024

Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Race 1

Post Time 12:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 VINO TIEMPO earned a follow from the debut showing interest after the SLOG and held up with a strong GALLOP they paired numbers on opening day over today's course and distance noting the outside post, very fractious in the GATE (was not checked out) could have been an EX on that alone making a WIDE MOVE. It is encouraging the connections worked since the race, a solid half mile breeze on 12/20 and come right back for this spot and distance with the class DROP while still racing protected.

In terms of the McPeek pair #7 SIGHT TO SEE has the edge on figures into this race while those numbers must be transferred to the route distance, it is encouraging they will not run for the claiming day. Esquivel is not one to think of as "first call" for this barn though this meet in a limited sample, excusing the one that stumbled losing the rider opening day in the VINO TIEMPO race, this j/t combination 100% on the board with four runners including a win.

Leparoux can often take that first call and aboard #6 UNDISPUTED VICTORY one of the few in for the claiming tag wheeling back for a second start, holds the route experience in a race closer to a lateral move earlier this month at TP.

#9 MIMI'S GRACE also races protected and with a start from that 12/6 common race. The ride was less than ideal noting a rider change here and post position shift for the first time moving to an outside post. That shift is noted for rail runner #1 LIL BREEZZY one that stacks up on numbers and will stretch out here though has shown in those two starts gate issues (SLOG, TROUBLES+) and things to consider on handicapping and value in this spot.

C. Torres will shift to FTS #5 GOT GAME making their debut here for M. Stidham, a barn with a solid 25% on the year win with FTS at the route distance. Most of those races were either turf or synth, (though broadening out the sample to 2020 still 17% winners with 61% ITM though many in that sample were races taken off the turf)the numbers show they are capable in this category and tough to dismiss with top connections.

Oaklawn Race 2

Post Time 12:58 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 G. ERIK earned a follow from a BTL debut over the summer at ELP though with the pattern of gate issues in the races that followed struggled at times to compete for the top spot. That said in each race they showed interest and could be the key with the connections returning to the one-turn today and the freshening showing up steady local works as a first time gelding. Number wise they fit in line with #12 STAYGOLDPONYBOY one that can be upgraded from the TROUBLE+ trip and place finish last out though also has the outside post to overcome and arguably a tougher group paired with a shorter number to look for alternatives at the least on the win end.

#4 NOBLE REIGN also returns with the distance change and first time going shorter. That said, the race back on 10/31 a one-turn mile at CD one of their more competitive races to date. Those competitive races tend to follow and "every other" pattern and could cycle back to that top along with the trip over a WEATHER impacted course two weeks ago racing WIDE, climbing NO_HANDLE over the track and in a race with the top two finishing together and lengths clear of the others.

#5 NOTHING BUT HEIR earned a follow from the September LRL race – an EX with BTL visuals TROUBLES+ bumped and stumbled off heels at the break and made a sustained MOVE, the only runner to make up considerable ground in running. #3 MAVERAMA also coming back from an EX in the August race and upside off that effort along with early speed that can often be effective in these MCL events.

The change in class is massive here for #9 WE NEED A FAVOR one that stacks up number wise with the main players in this race and could be dismissed on the board as a potential overlaid runner to keep on the radar.

Oaklawn Race 3

Post Time 1:26 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

As far as the runners with experience, #2 INNOVATOR holds that edge on that had recorded consistent figures and held his own against winners in stakes company – as recently as three weeks ago finishing second in the Advent stakes when on a week turnaround. That said, he has not stepped forward from the figure in his second start, one that has only been paired and could open the door for a new face to jump up.

#5 JUST CLASSIC has some run and could be live for the connections on debut. They worked well from the gate on 12/20 best over their mate in hand to keep side by side looking best of the two and race ready. #7 CARIBBEAN DREAM was entered late November at CD, the 11/27 INNOVATOR race and perhaps they ducked out did not want to run against Baffert and Barnes that day. The works lack a gap coming back for this start working recently at the FG with perhaps intent with the higher purse structure on this circuit and after the 12/21 gate drill mtb outworking his stablemates with ease. #1 SHEPHERD can run some as well though will have to see how that plays out from the inside with the 6f sprint distance.

Oaklawn Race 4

Post Time 1:54 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 FARLEY HALL should be set up to take on winners with the foundation and race to race improvement number wise while in live hands with the runners P. Miller has sent in so far this meet. They improved off the first two starts in MSW company and dominated the MCL group last month at DMR though did have things in their favor on trip from the rail and edge as the heavy favorite.

#8 ROCK SOLO shows up freshened with a similar pattern of foundation though could be higher of the two without the 1 sitting on top of the pp's, though still shows the speed figure progression with the improved number despite the 5th place outcome against starter company on 11/24, a slight flow upgrade. (The "1" recorded two back at CD in early November, a race with a similar par, staying on as the BOS to pull off the 37-1 upset.)

#4 GOVENOR HANK is a longshot with a similar improvement pattern with foundation like the others in this field. They have yet to run as "fast" with numbers on the lighter side, though with those race figures recorded in the spring/summer some progression with maturity could be present and if the case, would be sitting on a new top today.

#10 BIG RASEE finds a clever spot to show up where they can still race protected despite holding three career wins. Today's par is higher than what they have previously faced, though have the benefit of that confidence and live connections in their corner. The foundation and live barn angle also carries to #7 EL SARGENTO showing up and has run in the minors against winners. Number wise they lack an edge over others though still fit all the same and intent noting the trend and scratch under similar N1 conditions from a race earlier this month at TP.

Oaklawn Race 5

Post Time 2:22 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The two runners with experience both present upside while #12 BOTE being the most obvious with the BTL effort and place finish earning a strong debut figure in the process. #11 BIG COUNTRY BOY with a subtle flow upgrade, they had to RUSH and PRESSED on the lead tracked by the race winner and place finisher from well off the pace.

With many FTS, #8 HEY MISTER worked in company with a stablemate called More Power, a horse that debuted earlier this month with an honest effort finishing second with Bowen aboard, the rider up on More Power in their debut. #5 SAVED worked well enough from the gate in the rain on 12/14 and positive spacing of the drills for this first start the barn with just one debut winner in this category though that runner Heated Argument at 37-1 was with an apprentice rider and noted with that in play with Tyler Bacon aboard.

#10 HESA SUPER STARR brings in a steady series of works and while not the big jump off the page first time starting stats are capable with the right runner. That carries to #4 CAPTAIN HAMAZING with the connections involved and in contrast to those for #2 CASTLE GAP and #3 WAR MULE likely to get attention on that alone.

Oaklawn Race 6

Post Time 2:50 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

An earlier race analysis noted a runner excluded from a sample and that being #8 SOMERVILLE, stumbling and losing rider E. Esquivel at the break on opening day. They brought in some upside from the CD debut that should carry here and intent with the timing as well as the returning rider and work from the gate on 12/20.

With both Sight to See and Vino Bella running earlier on the card that could be worth following as #9 GOOD GAME ran in a common race with their 11/24 CD debut. This one overall presents upside in the second start and added ground for connections that excel with that move.

#1 QUEEN JUBILEE has the benefit of route experience and progression race to race number wise. They added the blinkers last month and for this race make a rider change with R. Bejarano taking over, a potential live sign as this jockey trainer combination paired with a good runner called Honor Marie and perhaps intent here with that subtle change.

Oaklawn Race 7

Post Time 3:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 COASTER showed more early foot in the morning than in the 9/27 debut (a common race with ML favorite, #10 GOING STEADY) over the off track and away SLOG with a WIDE run chasing a Fast early pace. She would be no surprise to show more early speed and overall run in this second start one we might not have seen the best of yet. And further upside from that initial start,. Should note, COASTER scratched from a similar spot earlier this month and will have Santana aboard in this race, one that was assigned to Avery’s Mischief on the day.

#1 BEE BLUFF turned in consistent efforts over the summer and caught a competitive group in October at KEE. Outside of some ground loss (WIDE) there was not much in terms of an excuse last month at the FG though should hold fitness from another WIDE trip and from the surface distance switch cutting back in this second start of the season.

The series of works for #4 SISTER LILY should have her race ready on debut. They were training forward over the summer with a slight setback keying off the gap from July until November when shipped in and pointed to this circuit for this initial start. #2 NOW WE GO also looks race ready off the visuals she was working best with a MCL stablemate tough to assess class off those visuals stepping up to MSW here though no knocks otherwise.

Oaklawn Race 8

Post Time 3:46 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 BIG MUCH was entered under similar conditions on 12/13 and was in the GATE though a scratch after acting up and unable to participate. They appear no worse for the wear back in this spot with Santana back aboard and likely has schooled from the gate in addition to the published half mile work since on 12/21.

#3 MONET’S MAGIC showed run and upside to IMPROVE from the earlier races and leading up to the maiden score last month. They worked the right trip with the trending live barn and earned a strong figure on the day, a number that stands out here as well as above anything they had run prior. That number will get a lot of attention here and while it makes them capable is something that should knock the number down and down much shorter than the double digits they have been throughout their career.

#5 HEAVENVILLE does not show a published work this month and since the 11/30 race as a concern. They have yet to take a big step forward though has run consistent figures and efforts that stack up with many in the field. In addition, they have yet to pass a horse and should look to take the lead here along with #9 ITSINMYBLOOD stepping up off the MCL win last month in against winners for the first time though a confident placement by the connections.

#6 AMOR PATRIAE found the right trip to pull off the upset though could find similar in today’s race shape. They will be tested not only to run back to that effort but could also require a move forward in against winners today though hold the win over this course and distance on their side.

Oaklawn Race 9

Post Time 4:14 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 YOU'LL BE BACK caught a solid group on debut favored first out and required some time after that first start though obliged as the favorite last month with the maiden score. She showed improvement number wise off a solid figure first out and some confidence off the win as they step up in here to stakes company.

The S. Asmussen pair look to present the biggest threat as runners with stakes experience though both must show more off those prior efforts back at the level. #1 ADEERA faced some legitimate fillies in the Rags to Riches, graded stakes types and has been freshened for this spot. Trip at the rail could be different today going back to show more early speed. #4 GLEE wheels right back in 16-days a change in prior timing from the dominant stakes win earlier this month. That race was the first around two turns, has shown trip versatility and clever placement finding the right spots to compete. That is noted with the circuit switch and rise in race par, along with the timing as the projected favorite. The two prior starts under similar company and circuit were just average sprint efforts in the June Debutante at CD and the Myrtlewood Stakes in October.

#6 JENKIN is the lone runner in this field with a race over the course and that race a win opening day. Granted they did find a PERFECT trip with the race FLOW, the prior two maiden allowance efforts held their own against solid company and similar could be projected here.

Oaklawn Race 10

Post Time 4:40 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#7 RESTLESS RENEGADE should benefit from the racing and key STRETCH out in distance. They presented visuals to suggest added ground was necessary back in October with the debut racing WIDE with NO_PUSH and improved to show early sprint speed and gain fitness on 11/23. They have worked consistently since with a strong half mile on 12/8 followed up with the 12/21 bullet move.

#1 AMERICAN PROMISE was given a follow on 9/27 (common race with #5 PUBLISHER) off the trip and one that should appreciate the STRETCH out in distance. While still looking for the win, the numbers from the two, two turn races in October and November were progressive and consistent with this field and race par

#4 PROBLEM SOLVED scratched from a race under similar conditions back on 12/13 and lands here instead. Some upside could be present, keying off the sprint back in October at KEE won by Touchy, a horse that has stakes placing and flattered with Amor Patriae coming back on 12/7 to break their maiden in the second start and racing earlier on the card.

Santa Anita Race 3

Post Time 3:01 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#11 SIMPLICITY is worth a stab in this race placed at the right level, surface/distance for their abilities. The SHORTER distance was projected back in November and caught a tougher group and higher race par playing a role in the October outcome and has since been patently waiting for a spot to return to the turf and finds that here.

Part of taking a stab in a race like this are the questions surrounding #2 FIFTH STREET in this spot with the surface/distance unknown and coming off a new top last out at LRC and B- at this N2 claiming level back at DMR. They project to show early speed from the inside though likely to find company in the early stages with #6 FORTY NINER GOLD in this field.

Also on value (or lack of) side, the lack of an edge for #5 BEE EYE GEE one that will get attention with the public defaulting to playing jockeys and the presence of F. Prat aboard. The race at this level back in November earned a B for #3 NASHOBA'S JOY, however that race at the route distance and shortening up here trip/value must be considered and on the higher side than the ML for a contender play. Their stablemate #9 TIZZ A GOOD THING is not far off numbers to compete in this spot and has tactical speed of the C. Gaines pair.