Handicapping Analysis
Thu January 9th, 2025

Emily's Analysis

Fair Grounds Race 1

Post Time 12:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 FROST AND FIRE was dominant (B+) breaking their maiden on 9/26 though just 10-days later compromised with an EX - EXCUSE at Hawthorne with the October trip perhaps just trying to squeeze in a race before the end of the meet. They have been freshened since and rater than run in the allowance they were entered in on 12/6 the connections pick this claiming spot instead a softer spot. That could be the key with early speed being a runstyle shared by the others in the field and could require a "BOS" scenario to win.

The outside post and 12/8 race off the layoff could be key for #6 GOLD PLUS in terms of fitness and to work out a stalking trip. They have had success on the lead though often a function of post and outside of the others could track and pounce.

Fair Grounds Race 2

Post Time 1:15 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 AMPITUP was third off with their maiden win and follows a similar pattern into this race. Based on the complexion of this field though could hold enough early speed (slight stretch out from the 5f races) to present a potential pace advantage.

Fair Grounds Race 3

Post Time 1:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 GOLDEN ICE finds a circuit switch second start for the barn and returning from a TROUBLE trip last month at TP in a race that had no real change in running order. The change in class should assist though a very short number is projected in this field.

A shorter number is also projected to follow #5 WALLEN RICHARD from the 12/29 race, an off the turf event with a higher par than what they find today something that could also move up common rival #1 DOES NOT COMPETE for a barn that looking for a win since 2018.

Fair Grounds Race 4

Post Time 2:15 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 GUITAR WOMAN moves up in this spot, a much softer par than their layoff return race last month turning in a solid effort with a WIDE MOVE and CLOSE in the show finish.

GUITAR WOMAN should have pace to target though perhaps #3 CUSTOM PUNCH will present the one to catch and prominent speed freshened for this second start of the meet, a flow upgrade from 11/24 and softer par as well. That race shape from 11/24 is noted and flow can be seen with rival #6 A MISS DEMEANOR making a late run into 4th and one that took a step back in their next start, the 12/15 race though also showed up with the front wraps added that day and could look for that change to project a move forward here - though worth a follow with the 7-2 ML to upgrade/downgrade.

Fair Grounds Race 5

Post Time 2:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 TACO CAT BACKWARDS turned in a BTL effort in the 12/15 common race and deserving of a look right back. The "other cat" #3 ACOUSTICAT could look to rebound coming up short as a the favorite with some excuse at the break (SLOG, TROUBLE_S) and showed run making a WIDE MOVE despite the running line and finishing position.

Fair Grounds Race 6

Post Time 3:15 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 CONCENTRATION should be live first off the claim and a clever spot to race in this conditional starter allowance where they fit and off buried form. They could even land higher than the ML and than their stablemate #3 TOSCANO one that picks up J. Ortiz and brings in early speed, early speed that could be tested with some others in this field (including ML favorite #6 PINFIRE) and trip assist CONCENTRATION.

Fair Grounds Race 7

Post Time 3:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 SKI PATROL met a higher par group on 12/13 and chased a Very Fast early and late pace. Their overall form fits at this level, has been consistent and in line with today's conditions.

Fair Grounds Race 8

Post Time 4:15 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Of the front runners, #5 CARAMBASO is upgraded overall (and flow upgrade from both 11/9 and 12/19) and in the second start of the meet. CARAMBASO is preferred to GUNNER GLACKEN especially at the higher odds. In terms of ML favorite, #6 GUNNER GLACKEN they will step up from the debut race and win back on 11/29, a restricted MSW event, a race that has produced one next out winner, the show finisher Akunmusire a FLOW added 1/27 AQU MOC winner.

#2 SHOOT THE NICKEL projects to IMPROVE from the 11/28 trip making a MOVE X_WIDE and returns with some changes back to the dirt and shorter along with a rider change for this race.

Gulfstream Park Race 1

Post Time 11:20 AM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Interesting to see J. Velazquez pick up the call on #2 STARSHIP MELODY on debut. Trainer H. Smullen has a smaller sample of FTS though a decent showing of runners posting speed figures that fit on par. The timing could have been picked waiting for a statebred spot in the 3yo season to debut with Lasix. This filly also could benefit from the maturity going back to April working 10.2 while green and still growing.

#3 CAMPAIGN SECRET is probably going to be favored despite the ML. One that turned in an honest effort on debut and given the connections for this second start.

In terms of ML favorite #10 WIN AFTER WIN, trainer M. Trombetta is capable with FTS in this category though at GP has sent out just one FTS around two turns since 12/2019 and in that same time period has just 15 FTS with one winner (03/2023) and one horse favored (finished off the board 1/2025) in that same time period.

Gulfstream Park Race 4

Post Time 12:56 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Willing to make a longshot case for #6 DIAL HOME showing up in the second start of the cycle and from a TROUBLE trip last month over the FG turf. Number wise they have a figure to run back to that stack up with the others in this field, their debut back in March at TP over the synthetic, and could be intent with that surface switch here. Wilkes has quietly sent out some live runners this GP season - a sample of 9 runners and 3 winners and if isolating that sample to just maidens (7) 42% winners with $2.14 ROI.