Handicapping Analysis
Sat January 25th, 2025

Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Race 1

Post Time 11:25 AM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 LAT LONG fits as a logical type though no walk over as they still require a top effort and trip in this field. They have consistent figures, competitive races under similar N1 allowance conditions and for in this second start off the layoff with course and distance experience coming back from the ¼ event. The race shape should suit their runstyle with tactical speed and finishing ability.

#1 SILVER HEIST has yet to show that big move forward though has been able to record three wins and some of their higher figures to date recorded at this distance and held those numbers at Oaklawn Park. The inside can be tough over this course though for this horse in this race shape, it could be the right combination. The primary speed is drawn outside and could even see #5 BADDEST GOOD BOY show early speed stretching out off the sprint debut win to keep things honest and SILVER HEIST save ground in position looking for first run.

#2 ELUSIVE TARGET has struggled at this level when it comes to a win, though has been able to run in for a share with a top effort. That top effort could see the time and place freshened for this return after a near two month break first off the claim for live connections.

Oaklawn Race 2

Post Time 11:54 AM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 SHEPHERD did not earn as strong of a figure in the debut though made up for it visually breaking SLOG from the rail and finished SAVED with a strong CLOSE and GALLOP+ as the top two set the pace and SHEPHERD clear for show. Off the experience and fitness could step forward in this second start along with the added ground.

As far as their stablemate #12 FEVER NIGHT they showed improvement last fall though lacked progression following the November races and still require a new best in this group.

#11 RAPTURE showed some ability leading up to their debut and turned in a credible debut behind the TAP winner and next out winner in Vassimo. They kept up their training and tested in company in the mornings at Payson including the most recent work on 1/19 in company with stablemate Gunmetal a debut winner that would be no surprise to show up in stakes company for their next start.

FTS #10 LIAM’S SONG shows up for a live barn and while it is a hurdle debuting around two turns from a physical standpoint that suits this individual along with the outside post and an assertive rider with Santana aboard.

#2 RIPPED also shows up for a live barn with Lukas sending out 25% winners with 58% ITM to start January and a lot of that success in the maiden category and with T. Bacon. RIPPED returns from a slight freshening and change in post from the CD races drawn outside in those events and one that has and might be at the best on lead and from there just a comes down to a question of class and quality.

Oaklawn Race 3

Post Time 12:23 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Baffert will get a lot of attention on today's card and in this race with #4 MARCH OF TIME a capable type though will find a rise taking on winners and in terms of par stepping up at the same time while also meeting as many rivals today as they did combined in their first two starts. While capable and would be no shock to win they are no strong standout as the live odds might suggest.

#12 ANTHONIAN has some similar hurdles though longer projected odds of the two (as stepping up to take on winners has some foundation with the juvenile starts and local works along) with intent for this meet training at Oaklawn (entered under similar conditions earlier this month though waited for a sprint rather than stretch to the mile) – working well into this race and as far as draw prefer the outside to the inside for this individual. Also should also not the 11/29 MSW race has held form, productive with horses coming out of that race two next MSW winners and the place finisher Wistucky a dominant (B+) open length winner last Sat at GP.

#9 BIG CITY comes off a class finish at the mile three weeks ago and cutting back in distance could be a positive for this individual. They will be tested to hold their form though throughout their career has shown consistency on numbers and outcome.

#2 GOODASIWONSWAS was live and sitting on a peak race three weeks ago and unlucky at the break though overall a BTL effort one that would make them competitive right back though still requires a best here and the right trip to win and left in the mix though out of the selections given the structure limited to three and based on that alone adding longer prices runners #3 GUNFLASH and #5 BRESLAU horses that can pick up horses for the minors.

Oaklawn Race 4

Post Time 12:53 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 ARROWTHEGREAT looks well intended with the connections shipping out for this race and higher allowance purse to make the first start of the year. They are training well at SA looks race ready. Blacker had success last season shipping in Straight No Chaser to an open length allowance win and the barn has had recent success since the start of the SA meet.

#6 BISHOPS BAY took a tough beat doing all the dirty work staying on as the BOS to get collared at the wire by longshot rival, Black Powder three weeks ago. They have shown natural early speed, though not a need the lead type and in the hands of Flavien Prat today could project some tactical options in this field.

#5 UNDERHILL'S TAB brings in current form and upside in this third start of the cycle. The November race appeared a prep for Oaklawn with the time off and shorter distance though perhaps timing too short heading up to the 12/13 race and trip not their ideal from the rail and find a change in post, rider and race shape to step forward.

Oaklawn Race 5

Post Time 1:24 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 HAPPY IS A CHOICE is also the top choice, a quality type that has been well managed and shown an affinity for this course and distance. They draw well from the outside with the complexion of this compact field and under regular rider Vazquez to work a trip likely sitting off projected pacesetters #4 GULFPORT and #5 EDGE TO EDGE.

EDGE TO EDGE one of two for Hartman and while #1 TEJANO TWIST finds their way more consistently in the money EDGE TO EDGE has the capacity to run a big race from time to time to respect their presence in this race as not just a "rabbit". Tactically EDGE TO EDGE has positional speed, something that TEJANO TWIST lacks though more than makes up for with a strong late kick and can close even into a slower pace, though does come down to timing and race shape to get up for the win, something that has eluded them in 2024 though man winning type efforts while settling for minors.

#3 DURANTE has struggled to regain the top form and consistency from the 2023 season and some of that with the rise in class though also paired with the layoff lines. There are still some looming questions there as those top efforts are required to compete though at the same time can be seen as encouraging they return to stakes company, find a rider change and different race shape and even intent for Oaklawn following an excuse in the 5th Season stakes last year (at the mile distance.)

Oaklawn Race 6

Post Time 1:54 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 TIME FOR TROUBLE makes a return to Oaklawn in their first start of the year and off the layoff. They have shown the ability to run well fresh and win off the bench and efficiency over this course with the dominant allowance win last January and credible show finish in the Essex (G3) behind the open length pacesetting, multiple graded stakes winner, First Mission.

#1 KINETIC is the up and comer in this race and does not have to face stablemate Saudi Crown in this spot and second go in stakes company. Since the debut this is not one that has stood out for the barn though to their credit has shown improvement race-to-race and reasonable placement here though one that again will be tested with proven racehorses and no strong edge as the ML suggests. #4 TONKA WARRIOR is no real overwhelming value at 6-1 though could drift and shares a similar runstyle, form and figures to KINETIC as an alternative along with the benefit of course experience.

#6 CREATIVE MINISTER has recorded some of their better numbers at Oaklawn and given the ML more creative idea than stablemate #3 SIR GREYLIND. CREATIVE MINISTER brings in current form and fitness while finding a rider change and different race dynamic to present their best chance to put forth a top effort. While McPeek has had a lot of success with another Hernandez, Colby Hernandez was aboard Winnable picking up the Valley of the Vapors stakes win last season.

Longer priced runners #7 CAROLO RAPIDO and #8 ARCHIE THE GIZA can get in for a share and price alternatives in that role to #2 HURRY HURRY.

Oaklawn Race 7

Post Time 2:25 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#8 LIBERAL ARTS makes their return to Oaklawn Park and stakes company following the pair of allowance wins coming off the layoff and working through conditions. The connections had shown intent to make that move earlier cross-entered in the Tinsel Stakes when that race was initially carded on 12/28.

#6 RAISE CAIN also makes their way back to stakes company and looking to return to the winners circuit since the Perryville back in October 2023. With that said, they have run in some tougher spots shown up with the minors finishes and overall have not run a “bad” race (never a C) in their career.

Arrieta picks up the call on RAISE CAIN as C. Torres shifts to IL Derby winner #4 PATRIOT SPIRIT. Trainer M. Campbell makes their return to Oaklawn park for the first time since the 2018-19 season though prior to that would run a string on this circuit and shipping back in for the first time in a long time could suggest further intent especially with this quality horse that based on the published work tab looks ready to run.

While #5 THE WINE STEWARD is capable of returning to form putting a line through the Belmont (g1) effort with the layoff that followed. That layoff is one they return from here giving up recency and local experience in their first start against older factors that makes it tough to take a shorter price even when the handicapping case can be made.

Can also make the handicapping case for #9 BRUNACINI one that is a perfect 2-for-2 with outside posts as they find that change for today’s race and can improve off the trip from the rail last month in the Cherokee Mile, a race at the mile distance shifting back to two turns here.

Oaklawn Race 8

Post Time 2:57 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The conditions of this stakes race present the upgrade and class edge for #8 ROYAL SPA one that has been knocking on the door with the minor finishes in stakes company though yet to take the official win. She comes into this race with current form and local form to support along with the class and speed figures on par.

#9 SILVER ROSE has not been as tested in stakes company though held her own in the two stakes attempts despite finishing off the board, trip played a role in the outcome perhaps more so than the class placement.

While those two bring a level of class that carries into consistency, #11 PHAROAH'S HEART has run just as fast and at times faster than those two and a major threat running back to those races here and not without the chance to do so with progressive numbers third off the layoff. Some intent could follow as the connections were entered and scratched from the Pippen Stakes last weekend for this race and one that

A longshot case can be made for #3 MOONLIT LADY with an inside post and based on the complexion of the field should be the controlling speed from the inside. When on her A game she can be very quick and on that has some buried Oaklawn form going back to her debut taking the field gate to wire as the BOS through a contested Fast early and late race shape.

Oaklawn Race 11

Post Time 4:40 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Tough to have a lot of confidence in #2 EL PRESTIGIO and #3 DREAMINBLUE for the top spot as they have shown who they are and that opens the door for others to jump up. Splitting the pair a slight edge to EL PRESTIGIO one that will be joined by their stablemate #7 OIL CAPITAL one that could surprise on debut. They were green showing speed back at the sale and come into this race with steady works since – the barn is capable with these types on this circuit and timing.

#1 FANATICAL earned a solid figure on debut chasing behind a solid maiden winner in Gunmetal for their debut on 12/26 and could step up in this second start. Number wise their debut was in line with #5 ZAT'S THE ONE one that landed a PERFECT trip still coming up short with the place finish in October and NO_FINISH in the 11/30 race, factors that lack appeal with projected shorter odds.

Still could be a race though worth a mention: #4 SECRET LEGEND was BTL on debut and found TROUBLE in their return race last month with the show finish; #8 JUST CLASS had their issues at the break SLOG/TROUBLE_S though showed interest with a WIDE MOVE and perhaps the type that improves with racing.

Oaklawn Race 12

Post Time 5:15 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 TWO DOLLAR EDDIE brings in early speed that should be the controlling speed and no excuses on that front or from a lack of fitness in the second start off the layoff. #1 TIME ANDBEYOND takes the rise back to MSW company though closer to a lateral move as one of the older horses and on their best day have recorded figures on the higher side of today's par. #3 BOTE is one of the sophomores though has run. They showed as much with a BTL debut at DED and making a WIDE MOVE in the B effort despite the place finish on 12/29. #6 PARAMOUNT PAYCHECK also with a sneaky BTL on debut a less than ideal ride/TACTIC- after the SLOG showing a MOVE through TRAFFIC despite the outcome. The barn has quietly sent out live/HOT runners this season including success with FTS.