Handicapping Analysis
Fri January 31st, 2025

Emily's Analysis

Fair Grounds Race 8

Post Time 4:15 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 A PASSIVE NOBODY presents upside off their debut last month - a BTL effort after acting up significantly in the GATE thrashing around though once they got on the track showed run making a WIDE MOVE and off the visuals could see IMPROVE off the initial experience.

Oaklawn Race 1

Post Time 12:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 FEARLESS LADY should have her best opportunity to compete with the key change in class and current form coming into this race. She exits a productive higher level MCL event last month, a race with a next out winner and Take Charge Milady the place finishers breaking her maiden in the next start before scoring the Martha Washington Stakes win last weekend. In that 12/20 race FEARLESS LADY can be given an excuse breaking SLOG and stumbling (TROUBLES+) a few strides out of the showing run in spots from off the pace.

#5 KERRY'S KISS finds favorable changes for this third start with the key class DROP stretch out in distance and rider change. Those factors along with adding Lasix for the 3yo debut and foundation should be sitting on a top effort and capable with just slight figure improvement projection from the debut sits in line number wise with the others in this field.

That includes #4 DINAH'S GIRL one that does not project to hold much upside to have confidence for the top spot though has shown consistency at the level to run back in for a share. With that said and projected shorter odds does find a distance change tough to say if that was the plan all along.

#8 JET PACK takes the drop in class and while they must improve it is encouraging they showed improvement in the second career start, the My Trusty Cat stakes and could find a similar improvement in this now second start of the cycle and key change in class along with a rider change as well.

Oaklawn Race 2

Post Time 12:58 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 ITSFIFTYSHADETIME appears to hold intent returning to this circuit and well placed where they fit on conditions making the change from the open company claiming events at TP. She holds form at OP while looking for the first local win. Most of the starts on this circuit were at a higher level and under similar conditions last year showed she fit with the pair of place finishes together with the winner at the wire. #3 BIG BAD DIVA finds a similar class drop and eligibility for this restricted condition in the second start of the meet. The place finish was an honest effort given the race flow closing ground in a Very Slow early pace. Trip will be required again along with a top effort. Those two make sense in here though runners that have come up short creating their own hurdles to perhaps look toward others at prices on the win end – or key for value.

#7 LADY MERCEDES can be upgraded for this second start of the meet and back in two week after significant TROUBLE+ in running. The timing suggests she is no worse for the wear and running back to her top efforts sit in contender status. #2 MARINA'S GOLD also wheels back from that 1/17 common race and projected to IMPROVE from the layoff return in December – doing just that with the place finish. Number wise she has shown improvement race-to-race and has yet to run back to her top number and could do so here following that progressive pattern in the third start of the cycle. #9 BUTTERFLY QUEEN also turned in a sneaky BTL making a WIDE CLOSE over a course that was tough to make up ground, though as a deep closer needs a lot in their favor to win though certainly can include with the projected longer odds.

Oaklawn Race 3

Post Time 1:26 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 FASHION RAGE makes her return to Oaklawn and with a key change in class running for the claiming tag. Often the DROP off a layoff can be a concern though the right move for this individual, one that has required the change for a long time and in this case running for the higher $30k and at the open condition this race still carries a higher $60k purse making this move a financially sound one.

The K. Puhl barn sends out an uncoupled pair in this race and a longshot case for both runners: #1 H. T. ZENA might appear a bigger stab “on paper” especially giving up recency returning from the long layoff where a top effort is required. With that said, she could be fit with the steady worktab has a steady training tab, a return to claiming company where she has been competitive in each start while in for the claiming tag and just one of two in this field that holds a win at Oaklawn. #6 KEY TO SUCCESS has the edge on recency in this third start of the season and appears intent returning to similar claiming conditions where she was competitive around this time last year and with Bowen aboard. As an off the pace runner that might not be as far back in claiming company and as far as value hold in that role over rivals #4 TIFFANY TWIST and #7 ROSE PALACE with a similar runstyle.

#2 UNDRIDLED LUNAR should return to a top effort and a positive change to claiming company, though still a rise from where she had been competitive in the races last season. In terms of form cycle she was a fish out of water in the higher level allowance group last month though as a legitimate longshot on the day and racing protected the intent might not have been there to compete necessarily but gain fitness and get a local start. Their early speed should also be on display and if the others fail to show early speed could be a front end threat.

Oaklawn Race 4

Post Time 1:55 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 CHUN MONEY appears placed at the right level for their abilities and to clear the maiden condition with class and speed to fit on par and in line with this field. They were favored in the 11/2 common race with the two S. Asmussen runners #3 AUSTIN’S MAP and #9 HALFWAY TEMPTED on the day CHUN MONEY with a WIDE trip a contrast to those other runners saving ground. The three month break they return from could be a challenge, though a challenge many in this field have coming back in this spot.

Recency could be the edge for #7 GOOD LORD shipping in from the FG second of the cycle and making their first start in MCL company. Those changes should move them up naturally and appears the right move as they have lacked progression number wise from the juvenile/sophomore seasons.

The recent edge could assist #6 GYSPY MISCHIEF returning for the third career start and a race over the course flattered with both Baddest Good Boy and Viking winning in their next start. The B. Cox barn starting off COLD this meet was an underlay with that trend last month, the barn has started to pick things up though still should be a shorter number. That COLD trend is noted for trainer M. Stidham returning with #8 DEVLISH DESIRE from that 12/21 common race as well looking for their first win this season and struggled with the set of runners so far this meet, though a capable trainer that can turn things around at any point.

The HOT trend has followed DW Lukas this season especially in the category with maiden runners and jockey Tyler Bacon aboard sending out 15 in that sample with 4-2-3 – 26% win 60% ITM with a (.16 posi ROI) as they look to keep that going with #4 MACHO VILLA a seasoned maiden though one that has recorded some of their better races sprinting at Oaklawn though a deep closer in those races and just minor awards in the process.

Oaklawn Race 5

Post Time 2:25 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 DUAL MONARCHY finds a lateral change in class and the benefit of fitness for this second start of the meet. They sat in an outside/WIDE tracking trip making a MOVE though could have lacked intent giving up two month recency on the day.

They will meet a common rival in #2 PERMAFROST one that might not have had intent either with their stablemate at the time, Lemon Drop Shot winning the race. Claimed out of that event and given a 42-day freshening by B. Cox could return to top form and form from earlier this season going back to opening day and place finish racing under similar claiming conditions to today's race.

Their former K. Puhl stablemate #1 WITHOUT OBJECTION returns with the benefit of recency in the second start off the layoff and back in less than 30 days. They should be fit and again show early speed as their preferred runstyle, and rail draw though could be contested in that role with others in this field. That includes the other D. Ward trainee #9 K CROWN on the class drop and favorable drawn outside might be able to fall into the same trip from then they broke their maiden on debut.

#4 VULCAN also has some natural early speed and picking off form in the prior years could make the case they are the clear horse to beat. Their current form is not as strong, though some upside as the connections claimed for 412.5 in November a subtle flow upgrade from the 12/28 race and tough to support just last week running at the higher $30k level, though with the race for fitness (they had not shown a published work since the TP start) come right back on the drop and E. Esquivel sticks along for the ride.

Oaklawn Race 6

Post Time 2:55 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

As far as the and up category the 4yo in this field and could hold that age and maturity edge over their lightly raced sophomore counterparts. Those runners all wheeling back from the 1/18 start with #8 BRUNCH PUNCH holding the edge of the group, though with that said would be the time and place for #9 WISE MISS to return to a top effort in the third start of the cycle and with a rider change to signal intent. She holds the recorded figures from last August, those numbers not far off BRUNCH PUNCH, with the noted difference in ML odds.

As far as the sophomores: #6 SPANKERBOOM also scoring with an upset on debut and Ortiz has shown some confidence with this filly stepping up to stakes company for her second start -a productive stakes at PRM as well with many improving types including Dancing Magic one that is multiple stakes placed including the Gasparilla win earlier this month. Ortiz had considered running in the Colleen Stakes at MTH before the layoff. The layoff she returns from here with has plenty of return works and should be race ready with Santana back aboard just out to show where she fits.

#2 FOIE GRAS had to overcome adversity at the break on debut and at longer odds to pull off the upset, a race that appeared to hold some quality turning out productive with 2 next out MSW winners. A move forward from the debut figure could be required to win in this group though even if she pairs the debut number, that figures sits in range and in line with many of the others.

Oaklawn Race 7

Post Time 3:24 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Miller scratched out of the Byerly Turk stakes last week with #13 NASTY HABIT for this allowance and could be a sign of intent. There were some class questions with the placement, though at the same time the jump to stakes company suggested a sign of confidence from the layoff. NASTY HABIT has had some setbacks with the layoff lines since their debut, though all in all has yet to run a “bad” race and interesting horse all around. Their chances of drawing in with just one needed to run than #14 NASH assigned the ML favorite role and would see odds significantly shift in the main body of the field with those two forced to wait for another day.

#7 MAJOR BLUE also picking this spot rather than that same listed stakes race. And could be better overall placement and intent. This marks the third start of the cycle though reason to suggest they have not been in position to show their best with the layoff return in November and complete EX – EXCUSE on 1/5 with the legit stumble/TROUBLES+ out of the gate and chased NO_PUSH from off the pace after. Juarez was assigned to ride in the Byerly Turk, remains aboard here and going ack to last season was aboard for the win under similar conditions last January.

#6 THIS IS USCAR brings in current form for this third start of the season and a lateral change in class for this now 4yo debut. Their tactical speed paired with the draw could further assist on trip tracking early and looking for first run.

In terms of the minors or if a top three selection scratches #2 TWO EAGLES RIVER can be upgraded in the underneath spots as a consistent type to get a share.

Oaklawn Race 8

Post Time 3:52 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Trainer S. Asmussen has a solid 1-2 complementary pair in this race. #7 GO WEST brings in early speed and while they will give up recency off the layoff can project an assertive ride looking to carry that speed as they have in the past and over this OP course – a solid local record. At the least GO WEST should provide early pace for #8 BOURBON HEIST to chase - a closer that hold upside in the third start off the layoff and change in class. They appeared to need the race showing up in the Thanksgiving Stakes and caught a stakes group in the 12/20 allowance with Banishing, Tejano Twist and Kavod all winning a stakes race in their next start.

Based on value and layoffs on the others #6 MIDNIGHT PRANKS brings in recency for their second start of the meet and upside from the EX _ EXCUSE in the return earlier this month with adversity start to finish and to change things up entirely will pick up C. Torres on the rider change.

Oaklawn Race 9

Post Time 4:22 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 ASTERNIA fits logically as the favorite in this race. She has shown a level of class and speed figures consistently throughout her career. This marks the third start off the layoff and subtle change when it comes to distance as well stretching out ever so slightly from the shorter 5.5f events and projected change in race shape as a result.

The early pace should still be honest especially with #9 ITZEL drawn outside making their local debut and picking up T. Bacon to utilize the weight break, not a normal move for this barn.

In terms of that potential dynamic, #8 LURE’EM IN should find the ideal trip with their runstyle with a chance to upset the favorite. They will be tested for a top effort at this level though appears intent shipping in second off picking up Bejarano while flattered with the 12/21 winner, Lithe Spirit on a win streak continued that run taking the Wishing Well last weekend at TP and met a few other stakes types in that allowance.

#5 DEALING JUSTICE brings in consistent form while a lot could be required to pull off the win the recency current and local form should carry and in terms of positional speed look to get the jump on common 1/3 rival #6 MIDSHIPMAN’S DANCE and #4 TITLED LADY rising back up in class following their win last out.

Oaklawn Race 10

Post Time 4:50 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#12 AURORA GEE can be given a slight flow upgrade from 12/27 moving up in this second start and with the change in class. There appeared some intent when dropped to MCL company last season as the favorite, might have been an underlay though as far as the outcome broke SLOG and showed run making a WIDE MOVE the outside post could be to their benefit.

#1 ALOHA BABY had the Fast early pace to run into for 4th and one that finds the class drop and second off should have every opportunity here and going back to prior seasons has recorded the highest figures in the field with the minor finishes and even a BTL with the 4th place to close out last April. The biggest hurdle has been trip with the lack of early speed and pace dependent and often trip dependent when considering a full field and how many horses they need to pass to get the win – things to consider at a shorter number even with the other factors are stronger.

The trip for #10 KIAMICHI was subtle though showed run in spots and did check with TROUBLE along the inside and maidens for this barn can often improve with racing and a move forward could easily be projected here.

#6 GRIZMO finds a post position change from their debut last September over the turf against open company with a compromised SLOG/TROUBLE_S showed run in a subtle trip. The barn has had success over the years with a positive ROI with long layoff return maidens and the longer odds should hold in this case though could look for early money as going back to the debut had some support at 8-1 from a 10-1 ML.