Handicapping Analysis
Sat February 1st, 2025

Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Race 1

Post Time 12:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 LUNAR MODULE returns fresh and back under similar conditions for their second start of the meet. Going back to the 12/15 race, many in the field had TROUBLE early on with LUNAR MODULE arguably taking the worst of it and to their credit finished with a strong CLOSE and took part in the BLANKET finish at the wire. They have kept up training since and flattered with rival #6 ETERNALLY GRATEFUL exiting the race to win the starter allowance on 12/28.

#4 SAMURAI PRINCE might have been fortunate with the trip and outcome with the DH for the win and majority of the field in a BLANKET at the wire. With that said, this is a consistent type overall and sprinting at Oaklawn with Vazquez aboard that makes them tough to leave out of the mix in this group and lateral class change.

#5 BRITERDAYZAHEAD could present the speed of the speed in this field with the complexion and draw. They will make their second start off the layoff with some adversity at the break in the ¼ common race holding as part of the BLANKET finish. Claimed out of that race and back in 28-days they will race protected here though as noted with SAMURAI PRINCE is closer to a lateral change when looking at par/purse.

The distance with the inside posts could create hurdles for #1 SHOW TIME to consider as value and with the recent results could see them shorter even a favorite in this race, a runner that otherwise fit as individuals in this field; and the distance change also noted for #2 RINGSIDE.

Oaklawn Race 2

Post Time 12:59 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#10 STONINGTON has the route experience figures in range for today’s par going back to last season and showed visually they fit at this level from the 12/14 race. The 4th place outcome is one they can IMPROVE from given the trip SHUFFLE WIDE and made a MOVE behind the top two finishers the race favorites, together at the wire.

#6 PROBLEM SOLVED is not an overly exciting type though the type that wins for this barn and the class DROP is logical as they showed class weakness back in October on debut at KEE and similar in the late December return, a race that should provide fitness and conditioning with the two turns and WIDE trip that followed as well as the noted COLD trend at the time for otherwise live connections on this circuit.

#1 NOTHING BUT HEIR had a look making the return on 12/29 despite the layoff had recorded a solid figure on debut before the EX and BTL effort in September at LRL. They did not have a full excuse in the December return though enough adversity with the TROUBLE_S making an early RUSH and finding TROUBLE in running. The distance change is an unknown though from the visuals nothing to strongly knock physically to suggest the mile will here is the main hurdle. Perhaps trip would be would project off the prior races paired with the rail they will be forward early looking to take this field as far as they can on the lead.

Oaklawn Race 3

Post Time 1:28 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 BABY BOAT was dominant (B+) breaking their maiden on debut and showed class coming right back against allowance company with a similar dominant score (B+) and noted speed figure improvement at Hawthorne. The step up in the Street Sense (G3) was a tough hurdle as far as class as well as timing wheeling back in three weeks for that start, they worked just 3 days earlier at KEE and overall a lot of running in a short time closing out 2024, especially for the modern race horse. The timing noted here returning fresh and in a reasonable spot to gain confidence to start the year.

#1 PERFECT MAGIC finds some class relief off the stakes races this season and has held their own in those events and racing X_FLOW in different trip of trips. The pacesetters ran 1-2 in the Advent Stakes and coming back in the Renaissance two week ago was used from the rail to set a Very Fast early pace, credited staying on as the BOS as the race started to slow late. The connections moving right back for this spot could be a positive sign given the timing as well as going back in the prior form cycle picked up the win third off.

#6 HOLA JOEY was also dominant breaking their maiden opening weekend in a conditional MSW company, an effort that validated the BTL visuals from the November debut at RP. They will be tested here and one that still has some gate issues to work through a good spot for them to compete as they fit with this field and potential for a contested early pace, something that can assist their likely off the pace run.

Peter Eurton ships in with #2 THUNDERHAWK one that projects to get a lot of attention in here despite the assigned 10-1 ML that looks high as the public can gravitate toward the speed figure recorded with the maiden win back in November. That day they were all out to the wire as the favorite in a compact field and the number is one they are out to validate, an outlier from the other recorded figures thus far. As far as this circuit is concerned, the barn ran a string back in 2020 with success this will be the first runner back at Oaklawn since sending out a select pair finishing off the board in the spring of 2022.

Oaklawn Race 4

Post Time 1:58 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The projected price compensation is enough to make the case for #6 MOOREA TIME in this field. The return race last month is tough to endorse though that MCL event held a higher race par than the events others exit coming into this race. That effort was also tough to take given the SLOG, SAVED and timing showing up off the layoff, a COLD barn and number wise does not represent her as the other figures in the past those figures from out in CA including the dirt starts fit on par here and the July figure could win this race for fun.

Class relief also comes into play for #10 CAPTIVE HEART making their seasonal return and class relief from the races to date. The class drop is not the most confident move claimed for $50k last October and after the CD race in November, a productive $50k MCL event the winner of the race, Indy Label returned with an allowance win at Oaklawn and place finish in the Pippen Stakes last month as they return here for the $12.5. Those factors should give them their best chance to compete and at the same time a greater chance there will be many slips dropped to claim.

#9 COLDASICE find a lateral change in class and turned in a solid effort for the level though could have been flattered by the race shape and projected to be much shorter odds here and noted the winner of the race Inventing Anna showed up flat in their next start. From that 12/27 common race would give #1 COLLADA a longshot look one that is tougher to make the case for off the first two starts though has had some subtle excuses, a subtle trip in the first start on this circuit including dropping the rider before the race and not asked for their best where a move forward is not too much to project. The barn did send out a 89-1 shot that finished third with Romero aboard back on opening weekend.

Oaklawn Race 5

Post Time 2:29 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 WINNING SONG earned a follow projecting IMPROVE going way back in August to their ELP debut. The barn had first option to debut in a 7f sprint though unable to draw in off the AE landed in the mile race and showed more run than the line and finishing position suggests held up off the pace after the SLOG making a late MOVE NO_PUSH and solid GALLOP+. That August race held form outside of the two next out winners with improvement from others in finishing position and speed figures. The placement here is reasonable where they can run protected present upside compared to stablemate #1 WALSTIB one that should be forward setting the pace from the rail.

#8 PAINT BALLER was entered earlier in the meet during a time of weather cancellations and presents upside. Lukas makes some changes for this second start adding the blinkers following the November debut from the rail – a SLOG and SAVED trip in a race that outside of the winner Anthonian passing horses did not have much change in running order, downgrading WALSTIB on the day. The off the pace horses flattered with Orizzonte returning from that CD event to break their maiden dominantly at the FG in their next start. (From the debut figure a modest 10-point improvement is required to compete with the other established types and in the terms of reasonable progression is not a big ask on a lightly raced horse.)

As far as the ML favorite the value just isn't there on #5 BROTHER TONY one that has shown who they are and from the races this season is back under similar conditions coming up short of a winning effort opening the door for others on the win end.

Oaklawn Race 7

Post Time 3:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 LEMONESSE might have shown the connections she is her best sprinting and remains at the one turn distance for the second start of the meet, could even project her to show more tactical speed. Going back to the 12/27 common race she had TROUBLE at the start carried WIDE as a result and CLOSE to finish in a blanket for the minors. For the most part there was not much change in running order up front noted for #7 ESTRUDIS and #11 MANAGING MISCHIEF returning in this race with a slight change in dynamic and a change in dynamic and post shift for #1 LASSIE MY GIRL as a hurdle to clear at a shorter number.

The odds look to shift on #3 LITE IT UP LOUIE returning here from the 12/7 race running at a underlay 4-1 though finds the change in price here and pace to chance and in terms of value likely higher than rival #12 READY FOR TROUBLE, a rival with similar form speed and off the pace runstyle.

Oaklawn Race 8

Post Time 4:05 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Part of the early pace should include projected favorite #7 STRIKE RIDGE one that fits as an individual and drawn outside those other pacesetters as a positive though could come down to trip if class does not carry noting the change to run today first time for the tag.

#8 SKYPED is not first time for a tag though first time in a solid time going back to a pair of race in MCL company at OP in April 2021. There were a lot of question marks for this one returning from a 624 day layoff last out and visually a pass returning with front wraps off the layoff – something to look for here though given that extended layoff it could be seen as a positive returning in two weeks, a flow upgrade chasing part of the Fast early pace and if back to their form from prior seasons they are a major player in this event.

#11 CHEZ WHIZ can be left in the mix deserving of a look in this race with fitness third off and returning to the claiming level – the level starting off the return in December, a TROUBLES+ and TROUBLE trip to move up off of. A contentious early pace assists their off the pace runstyle though as a deeper closer needs a lot of racing luck in their favor along with a top effort.

Oaklawn Race 9

Post Time 4:43 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This is a challenging race with the complexion of this field and a case to be made for all with different paths into this race. In terms of ML favorite #7 BENEDETTA she appears pointed to this race coming back off the two month break though also coming back from a big figure sitting on top of the pp's – something to get a lot of attention and prior races in line with the others including sharing running lines with the Hartman pair to create some value reservations.

As far as the Hartman pair, Bejarano sticks with #2 TANYA SHOWERS wheeling back in a week from the Bugler Stakes – a stakes race both #3 PHAROAH'S HEART and #4 MOONLIT LADY skipped to run here instead. While there could be some intent and again capable for the pair picking this spot instead, the intent could go either way with TANYA SHOWERS – all in all her form is consistent and has stakes form from prior seasons and best at today's 6f distance. The trip last week was compromised by a poor start, something of a pattern for many horses on the day and the 5th place outcome was a blanket for minors behind perfect winner, Lady Moscato drawing in off the AE.

#1 FIBBER has traded places with BENEDETTA in prior races as far as outcome the shorter distance was not her ideal running in the Poinsettia Stakes during the first part of the meet and for the 6f distance and the rail draw could show more tactical speed and perhaps that is the ideal with the rider change, tactical speed to sit inside and look for first run or at the least keep things honest as TANYA SHOWERS looks to pick up horses late – a similar 1-2 tactical plan last out with the Hartman runners with Tejano Twist scoring in the King Cotton stakes.

#6 TAXED is another question mark wheeling back in two weeks with the change in distance as far as intent. With that said, she brings in form; the compact fields created some subtle trip adversity this season to upgrade the place finishes and as far as the one turn distance she was dominant over this course and distance with the allowance win last season and even in the Chilukki (G3) put in a strong CLOSE in the show finish over the one turn CD mile distance.

Oaklawn Race 10

Post Time 5:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 RANCH HAND has a longshot look once again and demands price compensation not just off the races to date where improvement is required but for the colder connections. As far as upside that can easily be projected – the connections thought enough to try the Rainbow Stakes on debut and while distanced they recorded an honest figure with the WIDE trip coming back off the layoff last month, the front wraps created some visual handicapping reservations (a change to look for today) and as far as visuals in running they should gain fitness asked to chase the early pace (HARD_LEAD) showing tactical speed and the DROP a reasonable change to move up as well.

The 6th place finisher from that Jan 4th common race Paramount Paycheck returned to win by open lengths in their next start something that could be a further positive and noted common race for #11 GOD'S COUNTRY a long time maiden with some of the higher consistent recorded figures that fit on par and just a second start at this MCL level with some excuse with the start at this condition last season squeezing in one more race forced to land in the route and trip as well with the layoff that followed.

#12 PEARCY ROAD is another lone time maiden and like GOD' COUNTRY plenty of recorded figures that fit on par and stand out from some of the other lightly raced types. The value is short given the overall race record to support on the win end especially given the pattern of breaking SLOG, though could see them run true to form for another minor share.

If the Jan 4 race is the one to key off of in here #3 MR. BUTCH return for their second start of the season, had a tougher outside draw and the front wraps added for that race. They could see a removal here though will have the blinker addition as well as Santana taking over along with the class drop and a runner that going back to last season had been more effective in the two MCL event.